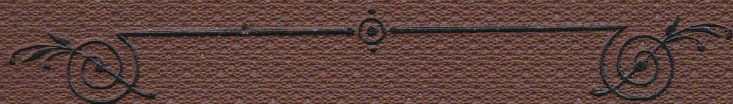


After the Thousand Years.



GEORGE F. TRENCH, B.A.



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16 May

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After the Thousand Years.

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*THE GLORIOUS REIGN OF CHRIST
AS SON OF MAN
IN THE
DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES.*

BY
GEO. F. TRENCH, B.A.

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*New Edition.*  
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INTRODUCTORY.

 HE vision of God, as it is the beginning of life in the soul of man, is, ever after, the longing desire of every true believer.

"Show me thy glory" was not a prayer suitable only to Moses' hour of great perplexity, it is the prayer of every quickened soul of men, for every day, in every circumstance of life, and in the hour of death itself.

The answer of God to that prayer was given in the Incarnation of His Son. In Him, while on earth, the "vision of God" was made plain, His "glory" was discovered to every opened eye. In His death, resurrection, ascension, coming again, and events consequent thereon, that vision becomes, and will become, ever more and more clearly articulated, till we shall know as we are known, shall see Him as He is, and be like Him.

And it is because "we see not yet" the full light of that glory, that all prophetic studies are so precious to the lovers of God. They reveal beforehand to faith what the eye is destined to see. They present visions of God in the successive stages of the glory of the Son. So that, if any ask what are the moral or spiritual benefits of such investigations as the following, we answer—all that exalts the Son helps us to discern the glory of God. And in that we learn of God, He is correspondingly magnified and enthroned within His palace-temple of our souls. The effect of the following

interpretations of the prophetic oracles must be, I think, in all who receive them, to magnify their views of the glory of Christ as Son of Man. If not, they have been written in vain.

There is another gain. Prophetic study is saddening. Coming judgment is its burden to a large extent. It is also humbling; for it discloses with terrible fidelity the dark depths of human sin. It will be found in the following pages that, while on the one hand, the splendour of the majesty of the Son is brought out, on the other, the inconceivable magnitude and depth of man's hatred and hostility to God comes into greater prominence than before. And thus, to the sympathetic soul and the willing spirit, the vision of God becomes the more wonderfully, excellently lovely, as self and man are caused to take a lower and yet lower place.

The moral effect, then, of such studies as these can be estimated truly. Not only to make sin more hateful, and to cast down those high thoughts that cling tightly even to His people, bringing them into captivity to the obedience of Christ. But also to exalt Him upon a throne high and lifted up, and thus, with love and ardent devotion to His dear name fanned to a brighter flame, to walk in holiness and hope, lifting up our heads in all distresses, as those whose redemption draweth nigh—these are the fruits of prophetic research, when, in humble self-distrust and patient willingness to learn, we are content to advance one step at a time in this Divine science of futurity.

There are two principal revelations upon which hang the greater part of the following conclusions.

The first was given to John, and is found in the 20th of

Revelation, and perhaps only there, where the closing period of the Millennium is foretold as one of general insurrection against Christ as King, thus revealing the true condition of the population of the world, taken as a whole, throughout the thousand years, as in sad correspondence with that of all the ages preceding it—viz., entire heart-subjection to Satanic rule, and entire, incorrigible hostility to God. A Kingdom such as this, it will be seen, cannot be the KINGDOM described in the Epistles of Paul to the Ephesians, the Philippians, and the Colossians, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the many other passages to which reference will be made.

The second revelation to which I have referred was given to Paul, and is that contained in 1 Cor. xv. 24, and only there. It is to the effect that our Lord will not reign as Man and Son of Man for ever, but will deliver up what has been called the "mediatorial" KINGDOM to God at its end.

From the above it will be demonstrated that, if the reign of Christ in its perfection cannot be millennial, and shall not be eternal, it follows that between the end of the one, the millennial, and the beginning of the other, the eternal state, must of necessity intervene that "Dispensation of the fulness of times," that KINGDOM of the Son of God's love, that KINGDOM that cannot be shaken, which it is the heritage of Christ to enjoy as Heir of all things, and Head of the new creation.

There is much in such a study to daunt and deter the spirit of fallen man. To range far beyond the sphere of present knowledge and experience, to pierce the thick darkness of the invisible universe, to lift the telescope to scenes

and times far distant, to venture even to seek visions of the ultimate glory of God in Christ, are enterprises great enough to send the ambitious soul staggering to the ground at its first essay, as, indeed, it happened to Isaiah, Habakkuk, and John. But yet the seeker after God is recalled by the fact of Scripture in his hand, by recollection of the prayer of Moses, and God's answer; and, best of all, by the gentle words of the Lord of Glory, "Fear not! I am He that liveth and was dead."

The conditions of advance in such a quest are given to Moses.

(1) "Be ready in the morning." Is it not the preparation of absolute self-judgment, of a spirit that longs with a single eye after God, of utter surrender of the will?

(2) "And come up in the morning." Is it not that we not only long for light and guidance; but also that we draw near to its Source in reverent attitude of discovery and appropriation?

(3) "And present thyself there to ME on the top of the Mount." This brings the soul and God together. The clay to the Potter. The empty vessel to the Fountain.

The Lord ever grant us these longings; correct our errors; and conduct us into all the truth! Certainly, my object will be attained if the following pages are sufficiently suggestive to inspire my readers to fuller and more careful attention to this branch of the prophetic page; for in prophetic studies there is nothing so much to be dreaded as a sense of full attainment, complete understanding, or assured finality.

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"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 17-23, R.V.

AFTER THE THOUSAND YEARS.

I.

The Vista Opened.

TO those who live shut in from the view of the surrounding world, circumscribed by an impenetrable screen of buildings, woods, or shrubberies, it is a great relief to have an opening made—a vista of the scene beyond. This is true, whether the scene let in to sight is beautiful or plain; for the eye, like the mind, loves expansion. But if, in addition to liberty and range, a new harvest of beauty and enchantment is obtained, what words can describe that joy?

There is a region on the chart of futurity, not usually so much studied as others, as to which, having had an experience of this kind, I desire to share it with those by whom the prophetic Scriptures are valued and enjoyed.

Not so very long ago Christian people generally saw nothing ahead but "the Judgment Day," the last day, the general dissolution of all things, and eternity beyond. But students of prophecy, telescope in hand, began to discern intermediate events—ranges of hills, so to speak, and mountains beyond them—and have proclaimed their discoveries with such a fervent "Eureka! Eureka!" that nowadays the old, crude, ignorant belief is well-nigh broken down.

Instead of talking about the "last day," like Martha in John xi., Christians are expecting, as she was then taught (vv. 25, 26, R.V.), the transformation of the living, and the resurrection of the sleeping, at the coming of the Lord: an event which, instead of closing the world's history, will—after the brief but most eventful epoch that it has ever passed through, for widespread suffering, cruelty, and war—introduce the Reign of Christ on earth, and be in fact a morning star to tell of the coming sunrise.

This Reign of Christ, long supposed to be a great spiritual revival in the Church, has been clearly discovered to be, instead, the fulfilment of a hundred promises to Israel, of restoration to their land, and, under David's Son as King, to their national supremacy in all the earth. Its very length is known; because absolutely and unequivocally foretold. It will last a thousand years; and terminate, melancholy to discern, not in a glorious expansion to infinite and universal prosperity and blessing, but in a great and general revolt—a tremendous and world-wide upheaval in rebellion against the King, His chosen people, and His seat of government.

So far, almost all the more thorough and practical students of prophecy are agreed. As for those who still cling to the old theories already referred to, I shall not contend with them. Our present object is to press inquiry into the regions beyond, and to discover, if we can, whether that thousand years' reign, with its furthest margin of violent breaker and surge, is, or is not, the final period of limited duration before the eternal age begins.

From the mountain height which revelation affords, it has been already discovered that the stretch of waters that our forefathers had taken for the ocean is but an inland sea, circumscribed by most definite borders. But what is there beyond it? Is that shining field of light, whose calm face looks up to the ethereal blue, reflecting its tints beyond the broken edge of cliff and foam—is that Eternity? Or may the prophetic telescope discover limits even there, and even in some small degree descry its features and ascertain its bourne? In plain words, Is the Millennium the final age or limited period before Eternity; or is there a further dispensation of fixed length, exceeding in glory all that came before it?

For this inquiry we are (let it be firmly settled) shut in to the pages of God's Book. No theory of men; no effort of imagination; not even the philosopher's stately progress by induction—will avail us. If it be not revealed by the Spirit of prophecy in the written Word, we must be content to wait for fuller light—to hope, but not to know.

NOW, WHAT IS THE MILLENNIUM? For if this be the KINGDOM of the Son of Man in its final form, if it exhaust the prophecies and promises of His human glory as Redeemer-King, there is no more to be said. But is this true? To answer the question let us recall its locality, its moral character, and its end.

(1) As to locality, the scene of the millennial reign is this planet—Earth (Psa. lxxii. 8-11; Isa. xi. 10-16); its centre, or metropolis of government, is Jerusalem (Isa. lii. 1, 2, 7-10; Zech. xiv. 16-21). As we have already seen, it lasts exactly one thousand years. Probably this will be the final or seventh thousand of the week of

millennia, which constitutes the world's history in its present form.*

(2) The moral character of the Millennium is given in several passages (Dan. ix. 24, R.V., *margin*, "to restrain transgression and seal up sins"; Zech. xiv. 18, 19), as one of sin and idolatry suppressed and life prolonged, while Satan remains imprisoned; and of sin revived in the most open and undisguised rebellion upon his release at the close of the thousand years, and the most frightful destruction of human life ever recorded since the days of Noah.

(3) The end is a scene of war. Jerusalem, besieged already seventeen or eighteen times, is besieged again, this time by an innumerable host of all nations; who throughout that period of enforced truce have never forgotten their ancient hostility to the Jews and their Messiah. And, but for the Divine interposition, the scenes of carnage so often enacted in the streets of the beloved city might be, and probably would be, repeated in a form many times more aggravated than ever before.

It should also be remembered that the great revolt, of which this siege is the terminus, will necessarily, from the account given, occupy a considerable time. To deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth; to gather them together to battle in numbers "as the sand of the sea";

* Chronologists maintain that the present year (1896) is in fact the 6033rd A.M., but this does not materially affect the 7-millennia view; at least, to those who interpret chronology in the light of that of Israel in the past, from which as we know ninety-three years are omitted in Israel's history, being the sum of several periods of national dissolution, which if deducted reduces the present year to A.M. 5940. Divine chronology is mystic, and none can calculate the dates of future events. See Dr. Robert Anderson's "THE COMING PRINCE" (London: Hodder & Stoughton).

to mobilize such vast armies; to conduct them across "the breadth of the earth"; and finally to lay siege to Jerusalem, for what length of time we know not—all this proves that the "little season" of Rev. xx. 3 must be understood in the light of other similar scriptural language.

Now I must ask the reader to keep in view the above characteristics of the millennial period, while we turn elsewhere to discover what Scripture has revealed about the KINGDOM in its fulness and finality, as the inheritance of the Son of Man.

For the sake of clearness, let us follow the inquiry upon the same lines as we have done in the case of the Millennium. Where, and over what domain and populations, will the Man Christ Jesus reign? For the answer turn to Phil. ii. 9-11: "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things *in heaven*, and things *on earth*, and things *under the earth*; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Observe here how vastly the millennial sphere of rule is to be enlarged. Then it was an earthly domain with Israel supreme in it, and Messiah, Son of David, for King of all, reigning, whether personally or by deputy (Ezek. xlv. 3), in Jerusalem. Here, things terrestrial, celestial, infernal, are brought to own the sceptre of the Son of Man reigning at the right hand of God in heaven.

Now turn to Rev. v., and compare the scene with that of Phil. ii. Here also we find (ver. 13) that every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, give honour to the Lamb; and

contrast with this, vv. 9, 10, in which the first or millennial stage of the Reign is presented, including within it men of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (earthly distinctions) and established "upon the earth."

For, in truth, the splendid vision presents the growing glory of the "little Lamb,"* beginning with His claiming the roll or title-deed of sovereignty, and expanding, expanding, first to include the Church's homage, then that of the celestial myriads, then the millennial earth's, and lastly, that of the whole creation.

How poor and deficient, then, is the thought and teaching that the earthly Kingdom, followed by one bright gleam of universal subjection, is all that our Lord is heir to! On the contrary, it is but a faint and brief light cast before, of the perfect glory beyond, as the dawn precedes the day.

Refer now to Ephesians i. 20-23: He "set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come: and put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (see also 1 Cor. vi. 3).

* The Greek word for "the Lamb" throughout the book of the Revelation is the diminutive (*το ἀρνιον*), never used elsewhere of our Lord. The object of this is clear. It is to bring out in the book of the glory of Christ, the depth of His humiliation; to contrast the more vividly His first and second comings. The dramatic effect of this in chap. v. cannot be missed when by contrast with the glories of the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders, and also by contrast with the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" for whom all eyes were strained, a Lamb, a little Lamb appeared to claim and to receive the Title Deeds of the KINGDOM. See Author's booklet, "OPENING THE TITLE DEEDS" (*Hawkins. 1d.*).

Set this passage side by side with those I have referred to from the Psalms, Isaiah, and Zechariah, and it will be seen at a glance, that the domain or sphere of the KINGDOM in its fulness cannot be that of the Millennium, any more than its centre can be at Jerusalem. For not only will this glorious Reign include the whole of the now inhabited regions, terrestrial, celestial, infernal; but there is reason to believe that the "heavenly places" will include the multitude of those star-worlds that now present such a mystery as to the purpose of their creation.

We know from Isaiah xlv. 18 that the creation of the earth, otherwise than as a place of habitation, was not in the Divine mind. "He established it—He created it not a waste, or in vain—He formed it to be inhabited." A world in His mind uninhabited is a world wasted, or made in vain; and when we notice that this teaching is introduced by the words, "Thus saith Jehovah, that created the heavens," it is not easy to avoid the conclusion that the same principle, involving a like plan or purpose, applies to them also.*

If then, as seems the only rational conclusion, God purposes to remove the desolation that characterizes the million worlds above our heads, we may be sure that Christ will reign as Man, unrivalled and supreme, in all those innumerable spheres.

Mind expands and heart beats strong in hope, as a view is thus gained of the possible employment in the government of these infinitudes, of those who now are being gathered into the Church for association with Christ in His universal KINGDOM, as Israel will be in His earthly.

The chart of prophetic diagrams (given on pp. 20 and 21)

* See "STAR WORLDS AND THEIR DESTINY," by the late R. J. Mahony (*Sealy, Bryers, & Walker. 2d.*).

will illustrate the opening words of this chapter. It is intended to show the growth of prophetic knowledge, insight, and interpretation, during the present dispensation.

The Word of God has been in our hands complete and unaltered during nearly nineteen centuries, and yet only now is there any evidence that the attention of the Church is engaged upon prophetic study in any approach to an adequate degree; only now, apparently, does the Divine plan and purpose of the ages (Eph. iii.) begin to be discerned and truly interpreted. We are told in Church history that at the year 1000 A.D. the whole Christian body throughout the world was exceedingly agitated, and instantly expectant of the Lord's appearing; so surely, though erroneously, had they believed that the Millennium was to precede His second coming, and that it had then run its course. Similar errors and false hopes have arisen in our own recollection—corrected, with grievous disappointments for the credulous, by the event. But our Lord's parable of the seed-growth (Mark iv. 26) is having its fulfilment: "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." After the sowing of the precious seed, which is the pure word of God (Luke viii. 11), comes a period of "sleep." The indications given by the writings of the early years of the era, show that almost immediately many of the special characteristics of the Christian revelation were lost, and the writers seemed to view it as little more than a revival of the Moral Law.

The seed in the natural world actually becomes corrupt and dies, or almost dies; and so even Scripture itself gives proofs how soon and sadly the purity of Christ's doctrine and precepts became corrupted with the grossest errors and most violent and shameful adulterations.

But yet it lived. And "first the blade" appeared, continuing, as in nature, in that state of feeble vitality for long periods of time. "Then the ear." Is not this the Reformation period, when truth, long dormant, and much corrupted by human invention, addition, and misrepresentation, began once more to take shape according to its original purity and Divine perfection? "After that, the full corn in the ear." How remarkable! When harvest approaches, the early seed re-appears in perfection, greatly multiplied, however, in quantity. So in the last days are we taught by this simple appeal to the commonest fact of nature, repeated annually before our eyes, that we are to expect a great development and wide recognition of true interpretation and exposition of God's Word. Truths long forgotten will be brought to light; errors anxiously nursed and fondly cherished will be exposed and slain; scriptures that seemed divergent, or even contradictory, will be seen to be in absolute agreement; the Bible will become again the best treasure of the believer, the mine of his wealth for daily acquisition, the paradise of his enjoyment here below.

And have we not witnessed within the last half century this great revival? Much lost truth has been recovered—none more remarkably than that which is prophetic. The chart shows this by several successive diagrams: the last illustrates the subject of the present pages. Finality

PROGRESS OF PROPHETIC KNOWLEDGE.

IN the Chart annexed my design is to show how gradually our present knowledge of the prophetic programme has been evolved. Also to show that as great changes have in the past been introduced, in the course of prophetic investigation, as that which is now suggested. For example, when the Millennium assumed a distinctly separate place, and the coming of the Lord was seen to precede it.

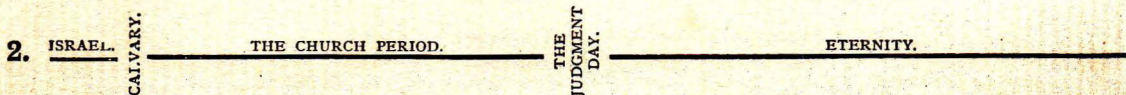
The effect of each great successive discovery has been to postpone the eternal state, and introduce ages, limited in time, previous and preparatory to that. What the present paper does is to point to an Age which is post-millennial and yet not eternal — post-millennial necessarily because

perfect in its character; terminable not only because of its title, "the Dispensation of the fulness of Times," but also because its course is broken in upon by the abdication of the universal KINGDOM on the part of the Son of Man, and its transition to God and to the Son of God.

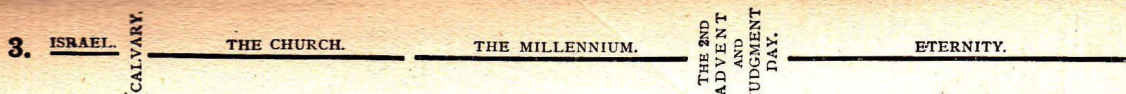
Possibly some further stage or stages, limited in duration, may lie beyond even that event. For who shall dare to say what are the number of "the ages to come"? As to that we say nothing. Let us only walk up to the light we are given from day to day, and God will reveal Himself fully, so far at least as we "are able to bear."



In the days of our Lord Israel knew nothing of a suffering Messiah, or of the Church, but looked for the King and Kingdom of Prophecy.



Very early in the present age, and for many centuries, the Kingdom of Christ was lost sight of, the prophecies being first spiritualized and then appropriated.



About the beginning of the present century the Millennium was partly recovered, but was supposed to precede the Lord's Coming.



More recently the true position of Christ's Coming was discovered, the Millennial Kingdom re-instated, and the prophecies restored, literally, to Israel.



Further investigation revealed that our Lord's 2nd Coming has two stages, separated by at least 7 years, as foretold in Daniel ix. 27



Diagram illustrative of the present Expositions, showing that the Millennium is not the final age, nor the "KINGDOM" in its perfection.

The Vista Opened.

is not claimed : far from it. Faith would lead us to expect a yet fuller discovery of the detail of prophetic revelation. We must be prepared, ever and anon, as the seed-grain fills in the ear, to have to tear up and reconstruct—if not in their main features, at least in their details—our charts of futurity. We must, above all, be prepared to add to them, as study in the Holy Ghost brings forth from the sacred pages of Holy Writ further and still further glimpses into that mysterious region which we, too soon, had marked "Eternity."

"Then onward and yet onward ! for the dim revealings show
That systems unto systems in grand succession grow ;
That what we deemed a volume, but one golden verse may be,
One rhythmic cadence in the flow of God's great poetry."

F. R. HAVERGAL.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power: but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

"And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."—REV. xx. 6-10, R.V.

II.

Millennial Shadows.



WE have now to consider briefly the most important feature of all, which distinguishes the earthly from the heavenly KINGDOM of Christ—the millennial age from that which follows it. I mean *moral character*. We have already noticed the very remarkable indications given in Scripture as to the mixed character of the Millennium, in which time Satan will be imprisoned, but not finally rendered powerless; in which rebellion will be driven beneath the surface, only to break out at the first opportunity with accumulated force; and in which multitudes will yield nothing more than a "feigned obedience" to the all-powerful Ruler, who, with His associates, the restored people of Israel, will rule the nations with a rod of iron from His throne of power on God's holy hill of Zion (Psa. ii.).

Is this a state of things consistent with Phil. ii. and Eph. i., and, let me add, Rev. xxi. and xxii.? Surely not. In the glorious Age of Ages that lies beyond that last of this world's long series of failures, the Kingdom of God will come, and the will of God will be done on a new earth *as it is done in heaven*. On that day of glory there shall fall

no night; there no tears shall be shed; no death, by fire from heaven or otherwise, shall invade its perfect peace—for death itself must be destroyed; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.

On that new earth, the heavenly city shall descend—the Bride adorned for her Husband, the ethereal mountain where Israel shall dwell; and the nations shall not go up as the sand of the sea to encompass it with armies, but shall peacefully walk in its light, and bring into it the glory and the honour of all their kings.

This cannot be the millennial age, for there shall be “no more curse,” nor death. *It cannot be Eternity, for the Lamb is still on the throne.* The throne is the throne of God and the Lamb. It must therefore of necessity be a period intervening between these two.

In confirmation of this conclusion let me point again to the tremendous contrast, a discrepancy destructive of the ordinary interpretation, which marks *the end* of the Millennium, as compared with *the end* of the Reign of Christ in its plenary sense as given in 1 Cor. xv. 24–28.

In the one, we see *insubjection almost universal*, Israel and the elect of other nations only excepted (Rev. xx.). In the other, *universal subjection* (1 Cor. xv.). In the one, myriads of men, who for a thousand years have tasted the repose of Satan’s expulsion and Christ’s control, stand up to say, “We will not have this Man to reign over us”—not this Man, but Beelzebub; affording thus a final proof that man, baptized and discipled, nurtured and trained, privileged and fenced round from every evil external to himself, and that for a thousand years—is radically and incurably tainted with diabolism.

In the other, Christ will display to all God’s universe, in a new heaven and new earth, the home of righteousness what has been the outcome of the sacrifice of Calvary, in the willing and loving submission to His gentle sway of souls whom His blood has cleansed, and His Spirit has quickened. Beholding this, the lofty principalities and powers of the angelic world, with all their innumerable hosts, will gather round to render homage to the Man whose way they had traced on earth as Babe of Bethlehem, as tempted Sufferer of the wilderness, and as “little Lamb” of Calvary. At that sight the populations of all the spheres that glitter in illimitable space will bend the knee, and every tongue in the new heavens, the new earth, and even under the earth, will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. This scene will permanently characterize the universal sovereignty of the MAN—it will be the Solomon-reign of peace following on the David-reign of war. Nay, it will be the Melchisedek-reign of Him who is Melchisedek’s antitype, the King of Righteousness and King of Peace.

I ask, then, can it be possible that a Kingdom of one Millennium, the shortest of all the dispensations, set up on earth and centred in Jerusalem, including within its range but one redeemed nation, amid a multitude of tribes and tongues and peoples, whose obedience, as to the great majority, will be unreal and their hostility merely veiled; a Kingdom which presents Satan throughout its whole length as an imprisoned, but still recognised, power; a Kingdom which terminates in an insurrection of stupendous proportions, only to be quenched in rivers of blood by fire from heaven—can such a Kingdom be the goal of all the hopes

of Christ as Man enthroned, and of His people as members of His body? Is this the KINGDOM in which death itself shall be destroyed? Can this be the glory for which God hath exalted His holy servant Jesus, and for which He has waited so long? The answer cannot, I ween, be doubtful.

Starting with the above imperfect outline, as to which I refer the reader again to diagram 6 on the chart for an ocular illustration of the interpretations given, it will be desirable now to enlarge a little upon each of their main features. First, however, let it be understood that the idea of two or more kingdoms of Christ is not conveyed by any scripture. The KINGDOM of Christ is one. Into that Kingdom, believers, members of his Body, the Church, have already been translated as a kind of first-fruits of the coming harvest. Its next stage will be reached when at His coming He unites all—the living saints whom He shall find on earth, and those who sleep in Him—in one complete, harmonious company, and presents it unto Himself, a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. There is also (1 Pet. iii. 22) His acquisition of, and entrance upon, the Angelic Throne; “and when He bringeth again the first-begotten into the world, He saith, Let all the angels of God worship Him!” (Heb. i. 6). The Reign of Christ in Israel will follow, and last a thousand years, and yet the world at heart will be unsubdued. His enemies will not be willingly the footstool of His feet for all that time, and He will therefore retain His place at the right hand of God, though ruling in Israel over the world. The final stage will follow, and then the unity of the KINGDOM will be seen. For then the Head of the Church, the Angels’ King, and David’s Royal Son, will be discovered in possession, as Son of Man, of all

the inheritance of man. On His head will be many crowns, for He will reign alone.

But, some one may ask, if in the Millennium we see the Lord Jesus exalted to the Headship over all things to the Church, the nations of the world only excepted, will it not satisfy Scripture that these should be subdued at its end, and the Kingdom, thus perfected, be at once surrendered to the Father?

Such a proposition could never be put into words, so repugnant is it to the whole tenour of Scripture, by any one who had not been accustomed to exaggerate the good of the millennial age, and close his eyes to man’s awful condition as disclosed by its end. He would have seen that all the scriptures on the subject of the perfected KINGDOM describe it as of long continuance, and that in applying these to the Kingdom in its inchoate form he violates their letter and their spirit.

The moral character of the Millennium, as well as the political and material conditions of the world in that period, have been generally understood by students of prophecy as presenting an almost perfect state of sinlessness, harmony, and prosperity. It is a task possessing little of attractiveness or satisfaction to seek in the light of Scripture to show that in these respects our notions of the coming dispensation have been exaggerated, and the glory of the King correspondingly diminished.

We have looked from our earth-prison, and thought the outside light was heaven. We have paused to listen amid the groaning of creation, and caught sounds of joy and liberty beyond, that seemed to be those of perfect bliss. And this was natural. The heart found rest and soothing

in the thought of a universal jubilee, an unruffled sea, an unbroken song of harmony, by contrast with its present gloom, and fondly believed that this was at once to come to pass, yea, that it was "even at the doors." But, in truth, the transition will not be so immediate or so complete. A better dispensation is at hand, no doubt, with vast changes and tremendous blessings in its lap. But the perfect state will not be yet. Let us not allow our displeasure at such a suggestion to turn us away from carefully and submissively searching the Word of God, to see what of good the Lord's second coming will bring to the world, and what it will leave undone, unsettled, and incomplete. Our object in Bible study is not self-pleasing, much less is it to fortify ourselves in present beliefs, as though no correction or addition were admissible. It is truth, truth only, and at whatever cost.

The same passage (Rev. xx.) which fixes the length of the coming Kingdom of Christ on earth at a thousand years, and which describes the arrest of Satan and his imprisonment during that period, reveals also that at its end there will be this great and world-wide revolt against Christ. The language is perfectly clear and most startling: "When the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to DECEIVE the nations which are in the FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to THE WAR; the number of whom is as the SAND OF THE SEA. And they went up over the BREADTH OF THE EARTH, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city."

I beg attention to the words in capitals. They indicate,

as I read the passage, that the greater portion of mankind, at the end of the thousand years' reign, will be in a condition of spiritual death, and of bondage to sin and Satan, while the saints will be comparatively a small body easily encompassed and besieged by the host of the infidel armies. It is evident that the people of Israel, and the City of Jerusalem, beloved of God, are the objects of the attack. The people of Israel will have been all saved (Rom. xi. 26) from the date of the Lord's reappearance, when the sight of Him whom they had pierced will lead to their conversion. Besides the saints of Israel and Jerusalem, there will be found at the outbreak of the war, scattered here and there among the nations, an election of loyal and faithful men, who will not join the great mobilization, or be numbered in the levies that will form the largest allied army ever yet seen on earth. That the fulness of Israel will lead to the riches of the Gentiles in every material sense, so long as they own Christ's sceptre, we know (Rom. xi. 12). That there will be godly persons found among the sons of the stranger (Isa. lvi. 3-8) we also know. And when, at Satan's summons, men flock to the standard of revolt, in numbers as the sand of the sea, coming up over the breadth of the earth, and from its four corners, there can be no doubt that individuals here and there among the nations will stand aloof, faithful to the end. But the masses, the world's population, will be in open revolt.

By means, therefore, of this terrible glimpse of the little season at the Millennium's end, a flood of light is cast back upon the moral character of the world during the whole of the thousand years preceding. It is a condition of outward

and seeming peace, calm, and contentment; but inwardly the heart of man is what it always has been—enmity against God and against His Christ. Discontent is forced underneath the surface by the rod of iron (Psa. ii. 8, 9). The nations will be Christ's possession, and the uttermost parts of the earth His inheritance, not by conversion, but by coercion, to be "broken in pieces like a potter's vessel," at their first resistance; held down as the "footstool of His feet" throughout that age; and at its end, when in irrepressible and incorrigible hostility they dare once more to lift the rebel hand against Him, to be utterly and finally destroyed by fire from heaven.

"O holy, holy, holy Lord,
 Eternal God, Almighty One,
 Be Thou for ever, and be Thou alone,
 By all Thy creatures constantly adored!
 Ineffable, co-equal Three,
 Who from nonentity gave birth
 To angels and to men, to heaven and to Earth,
 Yet always wast Thyself, and wilt for ever be.
 But for Thy mercy, we had ne'er possess
 These thrones and this immense felicity;
 Could ne'er have been so infinitely blest!
 Therefore, all glory, power, dominion, majesty,
 To Thee, O Lamb of God, to Thee,
 For ever—longer than for ever—be!"

J. POMFRET.

"The Lord saith unto my lord,
 Sit thou at my right hand,
 Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.
 The Lord shall send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion:
 Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.
 Thy people offer themselves willingly in the day of thy power:
 In the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning,
 Thou hast the dew of thy youth.
 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent,
 Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.
 The Lord at thy right hand
 Shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.
 He shall judge among the nations,
 He shall fill the places with dead bodies;
 He shall strike through the head in many countries.
 He shall drink of the brook in the way:
 Therefore shall he lift up the head."—PSALM cx., R.V.

III.

Millennial Sin and Death.



We are not, however, limited to Revelation xx. for our knowledge of the moral character of the Millennium. It is set forth fully in the Old Testament prophecies, notably in the Psalms.

That there will be then an atmosphere of tranquillity, wholly foreign to our present experience, is undoubted. But what is taught us is, that that peace will be mainly superficial and unreal.

Three times in the Psalms we find the submissiveness of the nations of the world to Christ's rule described as "feigned obedience."

Psa. xviii. 44.—"Strangers shall submit (*margin*, lie, or yield feigned obedience) unto Me."

Psa. lxi. 3.—"Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit (*margin*, yield feigned obedience) unto Thee."

Psa. lxxxi. 15.—"The haters of Jehovah should have submitted themselves (*margin*, lied, or yielded feigned obedience) unto Him."

This, then, is the condition of the world's masses morally. They are strangers to God, enemies to Christ,

haters of Jehovah; and that external calm which has so captivated the imagination of Christians is the product of power, not of grace; is the result of fear, not love; and is maintained, as we shall see, by ever-repeated execution of judgment on offenders.

This is set forth specifically in no less than eighteen of the millennial Psalms.*

I shall only refer to a few of them, hoping that the interested reader will himself search the whole list given in the note.

We have already referred to Psalm ii., which from its importance as a kingdom Psalm cannot be too much relied upon for the character of that age. In Psalm ix. "Jehovah is known by the judgment which He executeth. . . . The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." The beautiful royal Psalm, xxi., assuring to the King, the Risen Man, an eternal enjoyment of His Humanity, shows with what fiery wrath Jehovah will swallow up the enemies of His King. The 45th, from which comes our Hebrews quotation, revealing the eternal duration of Christ's Kingdom *as God*, teaches also that in the Millennium His sword and His arrows shall fall sharp and heavy on His enemies. In lix. we read, "Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be; and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth." In lxvi. 7, "He ruleth by his *power* for ever; his eyes behold the nations: *let not the rebellious exalt themselves.*" These last words ought to be strongly confirmatory of the evidence

* See ix. 7-20; xviii. 42-45; xxi. 1-13; xlv. 1-5; xlv. 6-11; xlviii. 4-7; i. 3; lix. 13; lxvi. 7; lxviii. 1-30; lxxii. 9-14; lxxvi. 1-12; lxxxiii. 13-18; xcvi. 1-7; ci. 4-8; cx. 2, 5, 6; cxlix. 6-9.

of the words, "feigned obedience." Their true state is that of rebels. But the sword ever drawn in the King's hand will prevent their exalting themselves against Him, till Satan is released that their true state may be shown forth. In lxxii., "His enemies shall lick the dust," and the blood of His poor saints (for even murder will sometimes occur) "shall be precious in His sight"; and, as we read in ix. 12, He will make prompt "inquisition" for blood shed.

Psa. ci. 4-8.—This Psalm gives us, perhaps, the clearest and most remarkable indication of the regular or normal system of government throughout the millennial reign. It is one of constant, discriminating judgment, detecting, convicting, and punishing by death all those in whose lives sin breaks out in overt acts. "A froward heart shall depart from Me; I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. I will early (or, morning by morning, R.V.) destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of Jehovah."

Psalm cx. rightly occupies a foremost place in all study of the KINGDOM; its opening words being four times quoted in the New Testament, to show their proper application to our Lord Jesus Christ. (See Matt. xxii. 44; Acts ii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 25; and Heb. i. 13.) Now what says that inspired utterance, which our Lord has endorsed with His own imprimatur? It confirms Psalm ii. and the others we have referred to in every particular. Christ is to rule in the midst of *enemies*. His people Israel alone are excepted. He will strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the Gentiles. He shall fill the places

with dead bodies. He shall wound the head over many countries.

It is not without regard to the possible effect it may have upon some holding unduly optimist opinions as to millennial beatitude, that I ask attention to the closing words of Isaiah's prophecy, a prophecy, be it remembered, which abounds in glorious presentations of Israel's joy and prosperity in that age. That the time is millennial, the whole context shows: ver. 18, "The time cometh that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory"; ver. 20, "And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an offering unto Jehovah, . . . to my holy mountain Jerusalem"; ver. 23, "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith Jehovah." Then follow these solemn words, "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." This language plainly conveys a continuance of judgments by death throughout the whole course of that age. (See also Isa. xxxiv. 8-10.)

I ask my readers if this is exactly the Millennium they have pictured to themselves? Does it convey the idea of a perfect state, of a Kingdom worthy of the Prince of Peace? If any one replies, "These judgments cannot possibly occur during the progress of the reign, they must be merely initiatory," I ask for some Scripture proof. I challenge the suggestion with great confidence, and point to Isa. lxvi. 23 again, and to Zech. xiv. 16-19, where we

are plainly taught that the judgment of a dearth of rain will be inflicted on every nation that shall fail (throughout the thousand years) to send its representatives once a year to Jerusalem to worship. But, even if this theory could be sustained, is it not manifest that a Kingdom, the peace of which is procured and brought about by such means, can be nothing more than what it has been already shown to be, a reign of might, terrorizing, and subjugating opposition, and leaving the world in its spirit, its attitude Godward, its lawlessness, its self-will, its sin, exactly where it now is, albeit outwardly reformed, nominally acknowledging God, and presenting superficially an attitude of law, order, and peace? (See also Micah v. 8-15.)

In dwelling upon the features of sin and failure that mark the Millennium, it must not be forgotten that so far as our Lord Jesus Christ's rule is concerned, it is a reign of perfect righteousness. As far as the purposes of God are concerned, they are amply and absolutely fulfilled. But see what these conditions mean: a reign of righteousness means—sin judged, rebellion suppressed, wrongs righted, oppression prevented, weakness and poverty protected; that is, it implies a world in its spirit, its tendency, and its will the same as the present, with righteousness then on the throne. The purpose of God also is the revelation of man's incorrigible enmity, of the incurableness of his disease and the need of a new creation. Christ then is most glorified, God's truth is most vindicated, not when we try to construct a millennial paradise, but when we honestly accept the scriptural description of that age, as an age of the old creation, deeply scarred and pitted with the marks of sin, terminable only in judicial overthrow.

" Arise, shine ; for thy light is come,
And the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.
For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
And gross darkness the peoples :
But the Lord shall arise upon thee,
And his glory shall be seen upon thee.
And nations shall come to thy light,
And kings to the brightness of thy rising.

" Surely the isles shall wait for me,
And the ships of Tarshish first,
To bring thy sons from far,
Their silver and their gold with them,
For the name of the Lord thy God,
And for the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified
thee.

And strangers shall build up thy walls,
And their kings shall minister unto thee :
For in my wrath I smote thee,
But in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

" For that nation and kingdom
That will not serve thee shall perish ;
Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

" And the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending
unto thee ;
And all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down
at the soles of thy feet ;
And they shall call thee The City of the Lord,
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

ISA. lx. 1-3 ; 9, 10 ; 12, 14, R.V.

IV.

The World's Ruin.

IT is necessary, in considering the moral aspects of the Millennium, to distinguish Israel from other nations. It will be found upon careful examination that many of the blessings which we had considered universal are predicated of Israel only. Take, for instance, the well-known verse in Isa. lxxv. 25, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the bullock. They shall not hurt nor destroy"—where?—"in all my holy mountain." The whole passage confirms this limitation, which begins with the words, ver. 19, "I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people."

As regards Israel, it really seems that every term of language is exhausted to convey the depth, sweetness, and perfectness of their national benediction : "They shall be all righteous" (Isa. lx. 21). They shall be the sovereign power in the earth. They shall be enriched beyond measure (see Isa. lx. 17 and lxxv. 21-23). To them shall flow all nations, and under their world-wide sway, peace, as between nation and nation, will prevail.

But when we turn to see the state of the Gentiles we find another state of things.

The nations will be subjugated by Israel (Isa. lx. 12), and any refusal to serve her will be followed by Divine judgment. That nation "*shall perish*"; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

Israel will receive an enormous annual tribute (Psa. lxxii. 9, 10, R.V., *margin*) from the other nations (Isa. lx. 5, 7, 11, 16), and the attitude of these will be one of forced submission. "The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet."

In Isaiah xxv., where death shall be swallowed up in victory, and tears wiped away from off all faces, and the reproach of His people shall be taken away from off all the earth, we read also that Moab "shall be trodden down under Jehovah, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill"; and many other judgments are mentioned. And even in chap. xxxv., where "the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose, and rejoice even with joy and singing," even there we read: "Behold, your God will come with vengeance"; and the "unclean" shall not pass over the way of holiness.

Gentiles will do all the menial service of their masters, the reigning nation. "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee." That is, Gentiles will be their masons, and Gentile kings will wear the yoke of servitude. Again: "Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers." That is, Gentiles will have to take situations as labourers, shepherds and cowherds, plowmen and gardeners, to the wealthy Jews of Palestine (see also Isa. xiv. 2).

There will be an actual state of slavery. For Joel iii. 8 declares that in that day God will sell the sons, and even the daughters, of the Gentiles into the hands of the children of Judah, who in their turn will sell them to the distant Sabeans (see also Micah vii. 16, 17).

The effect of judgments of God in the earth will be that the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah will cover it as the waters cover the sea (Isa. xi. 9 and Hab. ii. 14). For according to the context in both passages referred to, and more explicitly in Isaiah ii., this universal acknowledgment of God will be due to His fierce and terrible vengeance on His enemies, before which "they shall go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the earth for fear of the Lord and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth."

True conversion will not be universal, but all false gods will be utterly abolished (Isa. ii. 18; Psa. lxxxiii. 3-18, and lix. 13).

So great will be the contrast between Israel's prosperity, wealth, and blessing, and the state of the other nations, that there will be danger of a spirit of despondency, that is, of discontent or incipient rebellion, creeping in among the nations, and a word of encouragement is given (Isa. lvi. 3-8) which softens greatly the apparent asperity of the prophecies regarding them. We read: "Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: . . . also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants; . . . even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of

prayer: . . . for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all peoples."

Thus we are given to see, with great exactness, the relative position of Israel and the nations in the millennial Kingdom. Politically there will be the greatest possible inequality, viz., supremacy to Israel, but subjugation and bondage to the nations; nevertheless, spiritually, wherever a godly soul seeks to join himself to the Lord, though a son of the stranger, even to him will Jehovah give in His house, and within His walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters (Isa. lvi. 5).

I must not, however, delay to elaborate this branch of the subject. Enough has been quoted from the prophetic Word to show that the millennial state will be, outside Israel, a state mainly of unbelief, of inward rebellion against the sovereignty of Christ; and that while, so far as appearances go, there will be obedience and peace, in reality that obedience will be feigned, and that peace the result of strong repression, even *suppression*, and righteous rule with the sceptre of iron.

The KINGDOM of the Christ in its final and perfect stage will be something far different from this, as I hope to show. In that KINGDOM "there shall be **no** more curse" (Rev. xxii. 3), but in the Millennium, if the family of Egypt go not up to worship the King, Jehovah will *smite* the heathen with the plague; and as for individuals, "the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old *shall be accursed*" (Isa. lxx. 20). Thus sharp, clear, and crisp, the lines of the two coming epochs are contrasted in the Divine Chart.

From what has been said it will be plain, I think, that

the Millennium, instead of being the consummation, the final and perfect state of the world's history, and the plenary fulfilment of the prophecies of the kingly glory of Christ, is, in fact, the last of a long series of Divine tests by which man in the flesh has been proved by God. It is also the severest test of all, because it is a condition of privilege far higher than man ever enjoyed before.

Let us recall the five great dispensational tests of man that are past.

(1) He was tested in innocence, and fell.

(2) He was tested under conscience only, and the wickedness that brought on the Flood was the result.

(3) He was tested under the law of Moses, with all the elaborate instructions of type and temple, prophet and priest; and the result was idolatry, licentiousness, and crime, followed by defeat, national overthrow, and exile.

(4) He was tested by the actual presence of his Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor, in human form, who healed all his diseases, forgave all his iniquities, rejoiced with the joyful, and wept with the sorrowful in perfect sympathy, and the result was—Calvary.

(5) He has been tested since he murdered his Maker, by the presence **on** earth of the Holy Ghost in the Church, through which, though imperfectly no doubt, the character of God and the love of Christ have been widely made known in the holy lives and faithful works of thousands, who have sealed their testimony in sufferings or martyrdom; and the result will be seen, perhaps very soon, when the whole world will wonder after the Beast and worship him, and under his leadership make war against the Lamb and His saints.

In each of these successive stages of trial, we perceive the Divinely-given privileges bestowed in richer measure than in the one that preceded it. God, ever indulgent and long-suffering, seeks, by multiplying His mercies and heaping up His blessings, to overcome the deadly enmity of His creatures. But, hitherto, all in vain. Increasing grace but develops deeper sin. He has one great test to come. He will not give man up as hopelessly, incurably, incorrigibly God-hating, until He has deprived him of his last shadow of excuse.

And what is this excuse? "It is true" man's advocate may plead, "that we have enjoyed all these—God's gifts and favours—without stint. It is true we have violated conscience, and broken law; that we have crucified our Christ, and resisted the Holy Ghost: but the real cause of all this accumulated sin is not in us, but in our great enemy the Devil, to whom our first fall was due, and who rules us ever since relentlessly. Take him away; paralyze his power; cripple his malignant activity; bind him, and deliver us from his dominating influence—and then it will be seen that what our sages and philosophers allege is quite true—that man is radically good and virtuous, the victim only of an unfavourable environment, ready and capable in better conditions of yielding a grateful response to his Maker, and serving Him loyally."

And God answers as ever, graciously: "It shall be done; this, and more also."

(1) Satan shall be bound that he should deceive the nations no longer; and man shall be left untempted, untouched by external evil of any sort, to develop his virtues, if he has them.

(2) And not only shall Satan be bound; but lest the evil, so long rooted and confirmed, should take time to be counteracted and eradicated, the test shall last a full thousand years; and not till the end of that time will the trial be stayed and the verdict given.

(3) And not only so. Man shall have all the privileges of the previous stages of his probation, and more also. He shall have Conscience, and Law, and the Holy Spirit. But he shall have the presence of Christ also; not now in weakness and humiliation, but in glory, honour, and power.

(4) And not only so. He shall also have, dispersed through all the nations, the true lovers and loyal subjects of Christ (Isa. lvi. 3-8; Zech. x. 9); not as often hitherto, through inconsistency, weakening and spoiling their testimony—but absolutely righteous men and women.

(5) And not only so; but lest men should plead the infectious influence of sin in others, every visible offence in all parts of the globe shall be instantly punished with death, that men may see and fear and give glory to God (Isa. lxv. 20; Psal. ci.).

If under such conditions as these it shall be found that man, without new birth and unregenerate, can be induced to love God, to serve His Son, and refuse allegiance to Satan—then, indeed, may man in the flesh be restored to his lost paradise, and be set again where Adam was, as lord and chief over all the works of God's hands (Psal. viii.). But if, on the other hand, it shall come to pass that, at the end of this long probation, men rise, as of old, rebellious against God, stifling conscience, transgressing law, taking counsel against Jehovah

and against His Anointed, and thronging from all latitudes by express trains and ocean-liners to join the Satanic standard of revolt, and greet with deepest, heartiest, acclamation their ancient leader, now set free—if, I say, this shall happen—then shall it be known to men and angels, the wide universe over, that under God's last and greatest test of the natural, or old, creation, man has, as in all the preceding periods, failed, and that man's doom *as man* is sealed for evermore.

Now this is exactly what we know from Rev. xx. will surely take place. The Millennium will be, as a proof of the goodness of the natural man, a tremendous failure.

Where Conscience failed, and Law failed, and Grace failed, to convert, to restrain, to win, to captivate to God the soul of man as man; there once more all these will fail again, even though Christ be crowned and Satan bound. "Ichabod" shall be written in letters of fire and blood across the thousand pages of man's history under the rod of iron and the sceptre of righteousness; and over a Kingdom shaken to its base, by the shock of that stupendous revolution, amid the horrors of the fiery cataclysm, God will pronounce the final verdict of man's condemnation. At this point will doubtless take place that of which Peter speaks, when the heavens and the earth and all the things that are therein shall be burned up, and, according to the seer John, shall flee away from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne; and a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, shall take their place. And then, if our reading of Scripture be right, shall Christ enter upon the "KINGDOM that cannot be shaken," as the last has thus violently

been, and this word "yet once more" shall be fulfilled; when, having made not the earth only, but also the heaven, to tremble—signifying the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made—those things, even the new heavens and new earth, which are not shaken or shakeable, shall remain; and we, with all the redeemed, and all creation too, shall "receive a KINGDOM" under the risen and glorified Man Christ Jesus, that can never be shaken, nor fail, but which He shall at the end surrender perfect into the hand of God (Heb. xii. 20-28).

From this brief review of some of the characteristics of the Millennium, it will be seen that its place in the coming ages, and in relation to the past, has been by many misunderstood. It has been looked upon as the "dispensation of the fulness of times" (Eph. i. 10), when it will be rather the last of the long series of the Divine tests of the old creation, differing from them doubtless in respect of the measure of the privileges enjoyed, but like them all in its melancholy result.

Can that be called the "dispensation of the fulness of times," wherein (if we except Israel's earthly hopes) nothing is fulfilled or ended? The time of Gentile hostility is not full; for we read of nations being destroyed and wasted for rebellion against Christ (Isa. lx. 12). The time of suffering is not full; for plagues, famine, and death will take place (Zech. xiv.). The time of sin is not full; for only by direct judgments will it be kept in check (Psa. ci.). The time of Satan's power to deceive is not full; for he succeeds when released as never before in misleading the nations (Rev. xx.). The time of disappointment and disaster in the world's

history, morally considered, is not full; for God's elect King, after ten centuries of personal administration of the empire of the world, will see His Kingdom assailed and rent asunder by an almost universal revolt, and the joyful earth desolated once more by the ravages of armies, only to be stopped by fire from celestial artillery.

The "dispensation of the fulness of the times," as described in a few words by the apostle in Eph. i. 10, will present no such conflict of forces as we have seen will mark the Millennium. It is the blessed age to which I desire to direct further attention, in which "God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in the heavens and which are on earth, even in Him." It is the blessed age when Christ shall sit, not upon the throne of David in Jerusalem, but upon His own throne at the Father's right hand in heaven. When, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion," not only in this age, but also in that which is to come, He shall be Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body (Eph. i. 21-23); when every knee shall bow to Him (not under threat of famine, nor here on earth alone), but every knee of things in heaven, on earth, and even under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Then all things shall be gathered together in one in Christ; all things shall be given into His hand by the Father; the natural order shall have given place to the spiritual; the old creation to the new; and the Man, the risen Man Christ Jesus, shall reign triumphant over the whole, till God shall resume His throne.

"Pride—self-adoring pride—was primal cause
Of all sin past, all pain, all woe to come:
Unconquerable pride! first, eldest sin,
Great fountain-head of evil!

.
Hence man's perpetual struggle night and day
To prove he was his own proprietor,
And independent of his God, that what
He had might be esteemed his own, and praised
As such. He laboured still and tried to stand
Alone, unpropped, to be obliged to none;
And, in the madness of his pride, he bade
His God farewell, and turned away to be
A god himself; resolving to rely,
Whatever came, upon his own right hand.
O desperate frenzy! madness of the will!
And drunkenness of the heart! that nought could quench
But floods of woe, poured from the Sea of Wrath!"

POLLOCK.

"For ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that no word more should be spoken unto them: for they could not endure that which was enjoined, If even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; and so fearful was the appearance, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake; but ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel.

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not, when they refused him that warned them on earth, much more shall not we escape, who turn away from him that warneth from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain. Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire."—HEB. xii. 18-29, R.V.

V.

The Two Creations.



HERETO I have been occupied in the somewhat irksome task of seeking to modify the too sanguine views that prevail as to what the coming reign of Messiah will accomplish on earth. I have sought to show that, without diminishing in the smallest degree the promises of blessing which will accrue from a state of society in which outrage, violence, fraud, wrong, and crime of all kinds will meet with summary and certain punishment, we must not on that account become optimists, or shut our eyes to the manifest defects of a condition in which such exercise of force for the maintenance of order is necessary.

This process was unavoidable, in order to clear the ground for studying the constructive, or positive, side of the plan; and now, with a glad heart, let us turn to search God's Word for the design and detailed order of His purposes, and to see what place the Millennium fills, how it connects with the past, and why it must in its turn give place to a terminable age or dispensation beyond it, in which all its blessings will be multiplied a millionfold, and all its faults and defects disappear.

The key to open the door to comprehension of THE

PLAN OF THE AGES (Eph. iii. 11, Greek) will be found in the recognition of the great principle of *two creations*—the old creation, which has failed to realize its purpose, and is disappearing; and the new creation, which is taking its place by degrees, and is destined to do so completely.

The history of the individual is in this sense the history of the ages. When Paul is unfolding the new creation in its application to *man*, he uses almost the same words as John does afterwards, when he sees the vision of the new Heavens and Earth. "All things are become new," said the apostle (2 Cor. v. 17). "Behold, I make all things new," heard the seer (Rev. xxi. 5).

This is no accidental coincidence. It is a Divinely-given light to guide our feet into the way of truth. Take, then, the individual new creature, the believer, the saint, the child of God, as a pattern or sample of the whole new creation, and what light do we find thrown on the vast system in which he is but a unit?

A moment's thought will convince that the Divine plan is not to displace the old and corrupt nature at a single blow, and introduce the new and holy by a complete and final reconstruction; but to work out the change by degrees, by stages, by progressive increments, till the transformation is complete.

(1) To begin with, we find the natural man, the first Adam, tainted with sin, poisoned with moral disease, and doomed to death. Into the mystery of this condition of affairs we do not enter. Why it was permitted none can know. The fact remains. So it is with the natural creation throughout. The heavens themselves are tainted; for the angels fell. The earth is tainted; for man sinned (Isa. xxiv. 5).

Heaven and earth are, therefore, foredoomed to destruction, and will yet for this very cause have to pass away in fire (2 Pet. iii. 7), unto which end they are "reserved, kept in store," by the word and will of God.

(2) Sin in man is not followed by immediate destruction and a new creation. But instead of this plan, which to our erring minds would possess so many advantages over the one adopted, the destruction of the old is gradual, and its displacement by the new is correspondingly progressive. As the old decays the new grows. 2 Cor. iv. 16: "Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." So it is with the whole of the creation. God in his wisdom has elected to carry on, not a single but a DUPLEX SYSTEM throughout his universe.

Almost immediately on the fall of man in the flesh we find the new or spiritual order of things set going. First, the Seed is promised who should bruise the serpent's head. And then, in Adam's two sons, the old creation and the new are seen—the old, as the man in possession, being in the ascendant; the new struck down and apparently vanquished, yet really sustained, and ever renewed and kept alive by God. Thus the two great families, in parallel streams of life, originate, and may be traced all down the map of time—the natural or old creation being continued on its trial under the various conditions which we have traced already; and the spiritual or new creation growing up side by side with it, ever, no doubt, in weakness and comparative paucity of numbers, yet always growing and increasing towards the glorious destiny to which, in the mind of God, it has been appointed, when it shall be the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

During the early ages the new creation is only seen in individuals few and far between—as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Caleb, Hannah, Samuel, David, and others. The spiritual family or race had no union, bond, or association—the national organization of Israel containing no Church within it: there was, in fact, no “Jewish Church” at all. There were Jewish saints; but they were not incorporated as such.

But when once Israel had cast out her own Messiah, and He from His Father's right hand had sent the Holy Ghost to take His place on earth, a great development came to pass. Now, first, the new creation that for four millennia had been half-hidden and scattered amid the multitudes of the old (whether worshippers, outwardly, of God or of idols) is incorporated; the risen and ascended Christ reveals Himself as Head of the Body, of which all saints are members; and contemporaneously all the national superiority of Israel is abolished, and there is owned by God on earth neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free—but all are one in Christ. But still the old creation holds its ground—and still in vastly preponderant numbers—in pride and self-assertion.

In the age that is coming next, THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST, a still greater advance will be made in the progress of the new creation. For then, although the Church will have gone to its heavenly inheritance, to be an earnest there of the coming re-creation of all things above, her place will be taken on earth by the saved nation of Israel. For all Israel shall be saved. And then shall be seen, for the first time on earth, the spiritual family raised to the place of government, and

the natural or old creation subjected to it. We cannot know certainly what the relative numbers of the two great divisions of the earth's people will be; but there is reason to believe that in the raised multitude of the blessed and holy (Rev. xx. 6); in the powerful nation of restored Israel in Palestine; in the Israelite colonies in every part of the world (Zech. x. 9; Hosea ii. 23); and in the “sons of the stranger” converted through their means—will be found a population of saints vastly greater in numbers than have ever before been at one time on earth. They will be, as we have seen, not only greater in numbers, but vastly stronger in influence and power. For shall they not *live and reign* with Christ a thousand years? Instead of, as hitherto, being the despised and rejected (Gal. iv. 29); the persecuted and martyred (Rev. ii.); the downtrodden and oppressed victims of the God-hating masses in every age—they shall be raised to the thrones of the world (Psa. xlv. 16); and the long scandal of righteousness abased and sin crowned shall come to an end for ever (see Zeph. iii. 20).

But still the old creation holds its ground, as it does in ourselves, with terrible tenacity, and ever throughout these coming centuries will break out as opportunity may seem to invite insurrection (Psa. ii. 3, 9), to endeavour to reclaim the lost ascendancy, only to be crushed by the great King in Jerusalem, and to repent of its temerity in the agonies of famine and plague (Isa. lx. 12), till at last its leader, from the angelic host of the first heavenly rebellion and fall, shall again take command, and lead the whole of the armies of the old creation on earth to their final revolt, and final overthrow.

(3) But there is another parallelism in our illustration. In the case of the individual Christian we discover a very remarkable and very strange feature of his development. Inhabited by two natures, hostile yet co-existent, he is ever, in will and heart's desire, on the side of the new, and against the old. And yet the old, which is condemned, too often prevails against the new, or rather, prevails against *the man* who would fain be wholly governed by the new (Gal. v. 17).

In this state of things the great Creator intervenes to take sides with His child, and not only to foster, cherish, tend the new creation within him, but also to wither, to mortify, to starve and kill the old. This He does in three main directions.

(1) In our mystical death with Christ unto sin, illustrated in baptism, we see the figure of the death of Christ, into which we are delivered (Rom. vi. 17, Greek), by which the old man receives the death sentence, and the saint is set free to yield himself wholly to God.

(2) In suffering, whereof in almost every life there are not only numerous minor and constant experiences, but generally some one or two great and terrible events as a result of which, ever after, it is felt that life took a new direction, sin was seen in fresh reality and horror, and the new man found greater liberty.

(3) In death, wherein the final and complete deliverance is effected, when the last stronghold of the wicked one is levelled, and the free spirit is ready to be clothed with its house from heaven (2 Cor. v. 1-9).

With these three principal eras of the soul we may compare the three great judgments of God on the earth. To

some it seems incredible that the moral forces of God's Word and Spirit should need to be supplemented, or, as they would suggest, interrupted, by physical and material judgments, in order to work out God's purposes on earth. But we have shown that, even in the spiritual life of the individual, such interferences are necessary, for "what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" How much more, then, will they be necessary in preparing the way for the world's regeneration?

(1) At the Flood, in the days of Noah, the world died, in a very literal and terrible sense, and rose again. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us," etc. (1 Pet. iii. 21).

(2) At the Lord's second coming will fall the great purging judgment, when He will gather out of His Kingdom all that offends, and drive away the chaff into unquenchable fire. A marvellous outward reformation, corresponding with the saints' sanctification of behaviour and conduct, will be the result.

(3) And at the end of the thousand years will come death, the final dissolution of the race, as in the flesh and of the old creation, preparatory to the new heavens and new earth, wherein, as in the resurrection state of the believer, the perfection will come in.

It would be as unreasonable and as unscriptural to view the believer's present life as the complement of his human destiny, as it is to consider the Millennium that of the Lord Jesus Christ's.

The Christ of God, the risen Man, is destined to reign in and over a KINGDOM as perfect, as imperishable, as incorruptible, as the future life of the risen saints will be. But the Millennium is not that KINGDOM.

Before Christ delivers up the KINGDOM to the Father, He will be able to point to an unbroken reign of universal peace beneath His sceptre, and, looking upon the triumph of the new creation, to say once again, "Behold, it is very good" (Gen. i. 31).

The old creation was no sooner finished and found perfect than sin came in and spoiled it all, and the sabbath rest from creation was invaded by the needful work of redemption (John v. 17).

And, if we could suppose that this new creation scene would suffer a like calamity, we could understand the strange, though prevailing, opinion, that, immediately on its completion, Christ, its Head, will surrender His throne and Kingdom. But if that be false, as we know it is, and no sin or death can ever invade that glorious "regeneration" (Matt. xix. 28), then, certainly, as we shall presently see from Scripture, the KINGDOM "that cannot be shaken" shall *remain*, not pass away (Heb. xii. 27), till its length shall correspond with its glory, its duration with its inherent strength.

This "regeneration," which has its foretaste now in that of all believers, will receive, no doubt, a great increment, or development, in the Millennium, when all Israel shall be saved; but shall not be finally accomplished till by the second genesis, or creation of new heavens and a new earth, the new creature has found an environment in true harmony with his nature.

"The countless multitude on high,
Who tune their songs to Jesus' name,
All merit of their own deny,
And Jesus' worth alone proclaim.
Firm on the ground of sov'reign grace,
They stand before Jehovah's throne:
The only song in that blest place
Is—'Thou art worthy! Thou alone!'"

SANDEMAN.

"And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. And he came, and he taketh it out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne.

"And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth. And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped."—REV. v. 6-14, R.V.

VI.

The Two Resurrections.

IT will be necessary here that we should re-adjust, in accordance with Scripture, a prevalent error in reference to the associates of Christ in the millennial reign. From Rev. xx. 4 we know that "with Christ" others also will reign "a thousand years." These have been loosely supposed to be the Church. But they are not so. They are "the souls of them that were beheaded" during the rage of Antichrist, "for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast neither his image; . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." "This is the first resurrection." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Passing over individual cases in Old Testament history, the first resurrection literally took place when, at our Lord's death, "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after the Lord's resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Therefore, when the resurrection of Rev. xx. is called "the first," it

cannot mean the first that ever takes place—it means the first relatively to what follows. Therefore, also, it must not be confounded with the Church resurrection which we read of in 1 Thess. iv.: “The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds.” Here, again, “first” means before the transformation of the living—first relatively to what follows. This event is distinguished from that of Rev. xx. by many features. It is a resurrection taking place at the Lord’s descent to the air to meet his Church, and return again to heaven. It is accompanied by a corresponding change in the living saints on earth. It takes place before “that wicked” be revealed. The other inaugurates the reign of Christ over Israel; is not accompanied by any “change” to the living; and signalizes the rout and overthrow of the Beast, whose mark they had not received.

It is not then of the Church that we read that its members lived and reigned with Christ one thousand years; they are the faithful remnant of Israel, as we have seen.

The same conclusion is reached by reference to Rev. v. The four living ones and the four-and-twenty elders sing: “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed [not “us”] to God with thy blood, (men) out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and madest them to be unto our God a Kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth.” Here, again, it is plain that not the Church, which may be signified by the singers, but the martyred remnant, is in view, as co-regnant with Christ in the Messianic Kingdom.

The promise to the overcomers in the address to Thyatira (Rev. ii, 26) may seem to imply that the Church is to have power over the nations—to rule them with a rod of iron (Psa. ii.), and break them to shivers, as the vessels of a potter. But that would be a superficial interpretation. For, manifestly, it is not the Church to which that promise refers, but the victorious saints in it, who have kept themselves pure from Jezebel and her seductions and fornications; a special service, reserved for the specially-tempted, who have known and overcome the depths of Satan; and doubtless reserved, like the thrones of the twelve, for Israelite members of the Church.

For Rev. v. is to be read, not as a single event, but as a series of scenes, separated by great intervals. It is, indeed, a summary, in a highly dramatic vision, of the whole future as it relates to the royalty of the Lord Jesus. We have already briefly suggested the interpretation that seems to us most reasonable, which is that, at the time when in the counsels of God “He will restore again the Kingdom to Israel,” this challenge for a King is uttered by the strong Angel. Then first Jesus of Nazareth, the little Lamb hitherto keeping back from view—“hiding Himself”—comes forth and claims the title-deeds, and is proclaimed worthy by the Church, already for some time with Him in heaven. God sets His holy King in Sion and the earthly millennial reign begins.

Then also His faithful remnant of the antichristian period are proclaimed His associates. Then follows the angelic worship, corresponding with Heb. i. “When He bringeth again the first-begotten into the world, He saith, Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

Then ver. 13 conducts us forward to the consummation in the period which is the subject of our present study, describing a scene far removed, indeed, as to unanimity from anything that the Millennium will witness, for every creature in heaven and earth, and under the earth and on the sea, shall worship God and the Lamb.

The reign of the remnant with Christ will be earthly, corresponding with Israel's national hope.

The reign of the Church is heavenly, and includes, as we have seen from Eph. i., the far wider sphere of angelic principalities and powers, and all worlds over which the Christ as Man shall be supreme.

"O day of life, of light, of love !
The only day dealt from above !
A day so fresh, so bright, so brave,
'Twill show us each forgotten grave,
And make the dead, like flowers, arise
Youthful and fair to see new skies.
All other days compared to thee
Are but Light's weak minority ;
They are but veils and cypress drawn,
Like clouds, before thy glorious dawn.
Oh come ! arise ! shine ! do not stay,
Dearly loved day !"

HENRY VAUGHAN.

"O Lord, our Lord,
 How excellent is thy name in all the earth!
 Who hast set thy glory upon the heavens.
 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings
 Hast thou established strength,
 Because of thine adversaries,
 That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.
 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
 The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
 What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
 And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
 For thou hast made him but little lower than God,
 And crownest him with glory and honour.
 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy
 hands;
 Thou hast put all things under his feet:
 All sheep and oxen,
 Hea, and the beasts of the field;
 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea,
 Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.
 O Lord, our Lord,
 How excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

PSA. viii., R.V.

VII.

The Kingdom of the Son of Man.

AT this point let me reiterate, if only for the sake of clearness, that—while as we have seen the KINGDOM of the Lord Jesus as the Risen Man, the Second Man, and last Adam, will be, while infinitely glorious, yet limited in duration—there is no hint or suggestion that His kingly glory and dignity will ever end. Our blessed Lord has a double title to glory. In John xvii., "the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given them," refers to the one. "The glory which I had with Thee before the world was," refers to the other. The one is earned by the bitter toils of earth, and purchased with the blood of the cross—the other is His essential, inherent possession as Divine. Of the latter we are not treating, but of the former only. It is of the latter that it is written in Psalm cx., "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"—of the former, that when the end cometh He will deliver it up to the Father. If the distinction is kept in mind, no difficulty will be found in interpreting each passage by first placing it under its proper heading.

It will then become clear that, as we have already partly shown, the human or mediatorial reign of the risen Jesus has, in fact, four stages, separated by considerable intervals

of time, which represent the duration of each successive increment of His glory. The first is the Headship of the Body—His Church—which He enjoys already in part, to be perfected at His coming. The second gives Him, as Son of David, the perfect homage of all Israel. The third exalts Him to the throne of the angelic multitude. And the fourth brings the whole universe of heaven, earth, and hell to His feet—including the innumerable star-worlds also, by that time, it may be, populated with adoring myriads of His intelligent creatures.

Of this final period a remarkable feature, as showing the infinite glory of Christ, will be the abolition of the system of rule by delegation.

This principle of *rule by delegated authority*, which dates from before the fall of the angels (Jude 6, for "estate" read "principality"), was conferred on Adam, till he too fell (Psa. viii. 6-8), then on Israel (1 Kings iv. 21) till she apostatized, then on the Gentiles (Dan. ii. 36-43), whose "times" continue until now, and are to close in the blasphemous ambition of one who shall set up his throne in the temple of God and claim Divine worship (2 Thess. ii.). This principle is seen in full force in the Millennium. For (1) Christ Himself shall reign (by His deputy the prince), as God's king in Zion (Psa. ii.), the saints of the first resurrection (Rev. xx. 4) being His associates on the throne; (2) then the twelve disciples (the apostle of the Gentiles is not of them) shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28); and (3) of the sons of Israel Christ will make princes in all the earth (Psa. xlv. 16), that is, sovereign-delegates in each Gentile nation of the world. In other words, a complete system of deputed rule,

authority, and power, will be set up on earth, the whole of it being in the hands of the sons of Israel.

But in the final age, deputed rule will be unknown. The Christ, that is, Head and Body united under that name, will reign alone. He shall "put down all rule, and all authority, and power," "not only (says Alford) hostile power and government, but, as the *context necessitates*, ALL power. Christ being manifested as universal King, every power, co-ordinate with His, must come under the category of hostile; all kings must submit to Him, the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ—and see the similar expressions (Eph. i. 21), where, speaking proleptically, the apostle clearly indicates that *legitimate* authorities, all the powers that be, are included."

The teaching of 1 Cor. xv. must not, however, be confounded with that of Eph. i. In the former, no doubt, as Alford says, all powers are included, but especially hostile powers, such as will be so tremendously apparent in the closing years of the Millennium. The last *enemy* to be destroyed is death. It is the subjugation, overthrow, and destruction, of all hostile power. But in Ephesians it is not so. He shall be exalted FAR ABOVE ALL principality and power, might and dominion, and every name or title of dignity that is named in this age, and in the Millennium. From which it seems that the dignitaries, princes, kings, nobles, and rulers of all states, regions, cities, and countries whatever, and of all companies, classes, populations, peoples, human or angelic, though personally recognised and known according to their titles of honour, will willingly surrender to His sole hand and sceptre their several satrapies, and

yet as individuals, be present to add to His glory, and give Him still their homage and their crowns.

Therefore we find in Rev. xxi., that the kings of the earth, albeit not ruling now, shall bring their glory unto Him, just as the four-and-twenty elders are seen casting their crowns before the throne. Thus all powers that are hostile are abolished in utter destruction; and all powers that are of God contribute to Christ's glory, as *the one and only* King. This distinction cannot possibly be ignored, and cannot be too much dwelt upon. In the post-millennial age, no deputy prince will represent the King; no apostles shall judge the tribes of Israel, though the names of both are honourably retained in the gates and wall of the heavenly city; no princes of Israel shall occupy thrones in the nations of the redeemed throughout the earth—Christ will reign alone, on His head shall be all the crowns. As God holds the reins of providence everywhere and always, Christ will hold all the sceptres of government single-handed, not only in the new earth, but even in the angelic sphere above it. Thus, in this respect also, the Millennium is excluded, for here there will be no deputed authority; and Eternity is excluded, for Christ, as Man, will hold the KINGDOM.

We have now to consider very rapidly one of the most interesting, and at the same time fundamental, portions of the prophetic scriptures of David in this connection: I mean the 8th Psalm (see page 68). We know from the use made of it by the Spirit in the New Testament what stupendous volumes of glory for Christ underlie its beautiful but simple language; and yet the final verses show that the time had not come, when it was written, for their discovery.

The words of Psalm viii. 5, 6, are quoted three times in the New Testament: "For Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels" (or, "but little lower than God"), "and crowned Him with glory and honour. Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet."

The first quotation is in Hebrews ii. 6-8, where we may trace the four stages of our Lord's marvellous career as Man, and in them read the answer to the psalmist's cry, "What is man?"

(1) "Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels": referring to His earthly birth and life of suffering.

(2) "Thou crownedst Him with glory and honour": referring to His present personal exaltation.

(3) "Thou didst set Him over the works of thy hands": referring to His coming Kingdom in Israel on earth.

(4) "Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet": referring to His universal Reign in the post-millennial new heavens and new earth.

This interpretation of these final words will not be questioned when we turn to the second quotation of Psalm viii.: I mean that in Eph. i. 22, "And He put all things in subjection under his feet." That this cannot refer to the Millennium is manifest, when we consider who the writer was—the apostle of the "mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men"; "which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." Now this is not true of the Millennium, which in other ages was very blessedly revealed to the prophets as to its character, if not as to its duration. What we

have here is "the mystery," now revealed. It is that Christ the crucified and risen Man shall gather together in one all things in Himself; be Head over all things to the Church, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

This glory we shall share with Him as His Body, and the Psalmist's cry, "What is man?" shall be answered by the view of Man in Christ, supreme over all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth. This, we are also told, is to be the "dispensation of the fulness of times"—post-millennial, but not eternal.

If, again, this last word is disputed let us turn to the third place in which Psalm viii. is quoted, and doubt will, I think, disappear. I refer to 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, "Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the KINGDOM to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power: for He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under his feet." Then in the following verses, no less than six times are the words of the Psalm quoted, "He hath put all things under his feet."

Now it is manifest that the "all things" here subjected unto Him constitute the KINGDOM, which, at the end of it, He shall resign. This is the same KINGDOM of which we have been reading in Ephesians—the "all things" identifies it. But the universal throne of Ephesians belongs to Christ, not as God, but as Man; for the prayer is addressed to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Power is the power that raised Him from *the dead*. It is the glory of the Man, which is not to be eternal, though, as we shall see further on, magnificently prolonged. Thus Psalm viii., in its quotation in the several contexts to which we have referred, is expounded by the Spirit to point to a sovereignty

of Christ which cannot be millennial, and which shall not be eternal—the post-millennial, but terminable, Human Glory of Jesus as Head over all things to the Church.

Look again at the series of quotations for confirmation. In Hebrews ii., where the full passage is quoted from the Psalm, without any question or dispute the first stage of the Lord's exaltation is separated from the second by the length of the present dispensation—say, nearly one thousand nine hundred years, or whatever the interval is to be between His ascension and His coming to reign. This the passage itself avers, for the writer says, "But now we see not yet all things put under Him." If then there be one thousand nine hundred years between the first and second stages of His glory, is there any reason for doubting that a thousand years may lie between the second and the third? That is, that the full fulfilment of the universal subjection clause is to be post-millennial. Again, if the first interval last for the greater part of two millennia, and the second for a full millennium, who shall say that the perfect state, the KINGDOM proper, shall not last as long and longer before it is resigned? But of this more hereafter.

Again, in Ephesians. Does not the glorious unification of all creation, the heading up of all things in Christ, manifestly exclude the millennial age of veiled rebellion? And on the other hand, does not the human Headship of the Risen Man, in view of 1 Cor. xv., shut out Eternity as its scene? For there the risen Christ—who in Eph. i. is seen far above all the deputed rulers of both ages, the present and the next—is revealed, first, as gathering up the reins of government from all these, and then, at the end, surrendering them into the hands of God. The

angels, to whom the rule was first entrusted, will then resign it, that it may be concentrated—first, in the risen glorified MAN alone, and then pass back to the source from whence it came.

Dishonoured, and forfeited by all who preceded Him, the throne of government will be filled by the Son of Man, and for a footstool He will have His conquered foes; be they angels or spirit-powers, Satan or death, all must yield and bend to Him, feel the pressure of His foot, and as powers be destroyed, while His willing, and living, and loving subjects will be the resurrection population of heaven and earth in perfect union with all the unfallen creation.

And then, when the universe has seen the triumph of the reign of Man as Prince of Peace, when God's wisdom and righteousness have been vindicated in His rule, "the end" of time's changes will come. Thus in all three quotations we find that the final words of the prophecy are referred to a period beyond the Millennium, yet not eternal.

The three quotations may further be distinguished thus:—

(1) Hebrews presents the first or introductory stage of the KINGDOM—that is, the Millennium, the "world to come whereof we speak" (i. 6 and ii. 5).

(2) Ephesians describes its glorious character when fully developed in the dispensation of the fulness of times, and

(3) 1 Cor. xv. gives its end.

And thus a Psalm which seems to refer to our poor progenitor—a Psalm in which the Writer may possibly have discovered a prophetic earthly application—when

expounded by the Holy Ghost is found to point to the very highest, largest, and last of the sovereign glories of the Risen-Man-Corporate before He retires from rule, that God may reign alone.

This Reign of God alone will be the greatest fact in the eternal universe that is future, as it was the greatest fact in the universe of Eternity past.

When it is remembered that our Lord Jesus Christ has received from God His universal sovereignty as a delegation or deputation, it will be less difficult than otherwise to accept the truth that that "stewardship" (dispensation, in the A.V., Eph. i. 10 and iii. 2) shall be surrendered.

For it is not merely that He becomes associated with God in the government. The Lord Himself (John v. 22, 23) declares that "the Father *judgeth no man*, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." That is, the Father withdraws or retires from the executive of judgment, in order that the Son may occupy it, not for ever as we have seen, but till it pleaseth the Father to resume it.

The KINGDOM of the Son of Man is an interlude, a parenthesis, in the Reign of God, which is from everlasting to everlasting; and in which the Son of God ever was, and ever shall be, united in the mystery of one God.

David
No. Adam

"Gave this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—PHIL. ii. 5-11, R.V.

VIII.

The Triple Vision of Paul.



THE dispensation of the glory of the Risen One as Head of the new creation is set forth in the Epistles of Paul to the Colossians, the Philip-
pians, and the Ephesians, with great clearness and perfect correspondence. Yet each has its special aspect and scope. The vision of that glory given to Paul in Paradise, with unutterable words and supernatural splendour, was, possibly, a single one, not manifold; but the Spirit's re-presentation of it, by his pen, varies with the audience which he addresses, and the theme of his discourse. He views the vision from three several standpoints.

In Colossians it is called the "KINGDOM of the Son of His love," as "first-born from the dead" (i. 13, 18). It cannot, therefore, be a scene in Eternity; for the Lord will abdicate His KINGDOM as Son of Man before that begins. It cannot be millennial; for we find that in it "all things" in heaven and earth shall be reconciled by the blood of the cross (i. 20), which, as we have seen, will not be true of the Millennium. The King is seen in his primeval majesty, Creator of all things, Head of all, Source and Object of all. But His universal KINGDOM is reached, not by His Divine

title and prerogative, but by the painful path of the cross and of blood; it is, in fact, a human throne, a mediatorial KINGDOM, and the new Headship is that of the new creation, as the former was that of the old. "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence, in whom all fulness dwells."

In Philippians ii. the vision does not start from the creation, but, simply touching upon the Lord's equality with God, views that stupendous descent of His in its several successive stages—light after light put out, glory after glory laid aside, till at last the thick darkness of the cross, the unfathomable depth of that death, is reached. What a spectacle for the apostle and for angels! Yet, strange as it seemed, this was the path to Empire. This was the way, the only way, by which man could be restored to his lost inheritance. By this downward stoop, the foot of the ladder to the throne is reached. Then light appears. Redemption is not the theme, but the personal exaltation of the Lord Jesus as Man; and as the light of the sun increaseth more and more unto the perfect day, so the vision brightens as the path of the Just One is traced, right up to the place and the name of universal supremacy, till at, or in, the name of "JESUS"—one word, proclaimed aloud it may be, as He is unveiled and presented to the universe by the Father—in an instant every knee is bent, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth; and in lowly adoration or unresisting submission by men, angels, and demons, the lowly Man of Bethlehem is owned to be Lord of all.

The Philippians vision gives us in effect the three marvellous journeys of our Redeemer. The first, from the bosom of God down to the womb of the Virgin.

The second, from the mean manger of Bethlehem, still downward to the hideous, cruel cross of Calvary. The third, upward from the tomb of Joseph to the throne of God.

This last of the three begins in the silent, secret, unseen awaking from the grave, and advances stage by stage, through manifestations of Himself given to one and others of His wondering disciples, on to ascension in the presence and view of the eleven Apostles, right up to, and through, the angelic hosts; and still on and upwards, past the princes, potentates, powers of the heavenlies, never pausing, never halting, till He, the Man of Bethlehem, who hung but a few weeks before upon the gallows of Calvary, sits down at the right hand of God; thence to advance from glory to glory in the sway and sovereignty of souls; till, first, the whole Church complete, then all angels, then Israel, submit themselves to Him. Nor even then to stay His upward progress. No! not till in the renovated material creation He shall reign alone; not one living being to dispute His title and His sway; not one but God only above Him, the Nazarene, ~~the Carpenter~~, the Man of Sorrows, of sin-bearing, and the criminal's cross!

What a majestic march! What a stately sight and splendid progress! What a climax of wonder, worship, and glory! In one sense it will have an end, when He surrenders it to God; in another, never, for at that abdication Christ but leaves the human Kingdom to retire into the Divine. He ceases to rule the universe as Man, that He may rule it for ever and ever as God!

In Ephesians i. the apostle is occupied with the same glorious revelation, but now from a different point of view.

Omitting the creative glory, and passing over the deep descent, he views the vision here as starting from the resurrection. The cross is not in this connection named. For now it is not the personal glory of the Son, original or acquired, with which he is concerned, so much as that of His people in Him, His glory as made ours, ours as in Him. Here, therefore, the doctrinal statement into which the Colossians vision is woven, and the hortative language with which the Philippians vision intermingles, are exchanged for the language of prayer; prayer that our eyes—the eyes of our heart—may be enlightened to behold what he saw (whether in the body or out of the body, he could not say); may be enlightened to follow the radiant path of light by which, starting from Joseph's tomb, He rose and ascended, not pausing till He reached the right hand of God in the heavenlies, far above every name of nobility and dominion, to be there as His Church's Head, fulness of all, Head of all, and universal King. Here, again, the Millennium is not in view. No word of Jerusalem, of the Holy Land, or of Israel, is given. That age is passed and gone in the clouds of a great ruin and a greater judgment. But it is not eternal either, for it is the KINGDOM of the Son of Man. His title is quoted from Psalm viii., "All things are under his feet." He has not yet given up the KINGDOM to God. The Man is He that filleth all things. He does so in perfection, and for long. The "dispensation of the fulness of times" will not begin and finish in an instant.

What a glorious vision of futurity have we in this triple presentation! And yet the vision is but one. It is the revelation, the prophetic apocalypse of the glory of

man—of man in Christ regenerate, in the new heavens and new earth prepared for his enjoyment for a period long enough to be worthy of the Worker and the work. In that scene stands the cross, one of three, in the foreground and centre of it all. There, at the level to which sin had sunk mankind—fitly represented by a crucified robber at His right, and a crucified robber at His left—hangs the Son of God, condemned to die the horrible death of a criminal. But upon that cross shines a light from the past Eternity; for the Crucified is the Creator. And from that cross springs a beam of glory that swells and grows, expanding, brightening ever, and carrying the seer's eye to where man, sometime ruined by the devil, but now regenerate in Christ, sits with Him upon the throne of all the universe. It is not a procession of the ages, past, present, and to come, that Paul beholds. It is the Age of Ages, founded on the Calvary scene, and lighted from Eternity past. One little scrap of earth's history, a condensation of one human biography, is all of this world that he beholds. But round that fragment of briefest time and deepest shame, what glories past and future circle! Genesis is there, but not as seen by Moses; Revelation is there, but not as seen by John. The Alpha and the Omega fills all his eye—the Word that spoke creation; the Word made flesh; the Word that perfects the new creation, and presides therein indefinitely, and then at last resigns His throne unquestioned and unmarred to God.

Because Thou hast, though throned on highest bliss,
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found,
By merit more than birthright, Son of God,

The Triple Vision of Paul.

Found worthiest to be so by being good ;
 Far more than great or high, because in Thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory abounds ;
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With Thee thy manhood also to this throne :
 Here shalt Thou sit, incarnate here shalt reign,
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
 Anointed universal King ; all power
 I give Thee . . . under Thee as Head Supreme,
 Thrones, principedoms, power, dominions I reduce ;
 All knees to Thee shall bow of them that bide
 In Heaven, or earth, or under earth in hell.

MILTON.

"The God, who reigns on high,
 The great Archangels sing,
 And, 'Holy, holy, holy' cry,
 'Almighty King !
 Who was, and is, the same,
 And evermore shall be !
 Jehovah ! Father ! Great I *Am* !
 We worship Thee !'"

T. OLIVERS.

"For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgement and destruction of ungodly men.

"But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is long-suffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

"Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons, ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight, And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation."—2 PER. iii. 5-15, REV.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. . . . And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true.

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and shewed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."

REV. xxi. 1, 5, 10, REV.

IX.

The New Earth.



ASS on now to the later chapters of the Revelation. There, in the language of imagery which captures the wonder and joyful hope of us all, we have this glorious post-millennial age described. Of chap. xx. we have spoken above.

It tells of the ruin of millennial hopes, the destruction of that *régime* of apparent peace and goodwill, followed by the fire from God and the great white throne.

Chapter xxi. opens with the passing away of the old heavens and earth, and then the new creation discloses, in its place, the platform on which the Risen Christ is at last to fulfil Man's glorious Destiny of Universal Rule.

The chapter proceeds at once to describe the scene. It would be out of place here to attempt a detailed examination of these chapters, to prove that the Bride, the Lamb's wife, which is the holy city, the New Jerusalem, cannot mean the Church. That has been done elsewhere at some length already. (See vols. iv. and v. of "Golden Lamp." *Hawkins*.) But, at least, I may summarize the arguments as suggestions for further study. The title of the city, New Jerusalem, points to the glorious abode of Israel in the post-millennial age. Our first lessons in prophetic study were that Israel, Judah, Jerusalem, were names to be understood literally, and not spiritualized. We need to

apply those lessons here. The names of the tribes in the gates, and of the twelve apostles in the foundations of its wall, are further evidence of the same; for in all these respects the Church, as such, is excluded. The name of Paul, the "apostle of the mystery," is not there. He is never called an apostle of the Lamb. He had not fulfilled the conditions of one (Acts i. 21, 22). Moreover, the great and high wall is significant of an essentially national character. Read in this connection Ephesians ii., and ask how, if this be indeed the Church city, a wall, great and high, can appear circumscribing it. Is not the middle wall of partition "broken down" for ever? But again, the city comes down *out of heaven* to earth, and there abides for all that Age at least, perhaps for all Eternity. The destiny of Israel is earthly, and this is her abode. The Church's calling is heavenly, and the heavens will be her everlasting home. The very term, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, confirms this view to every careful and consistent reader of the Old and New Testaments as one Book of God. I need only refer to Jer. iii. 14, Isa. lxii. 5, Ezek. xvi. 6-14, and many like passages, confirmed by types derived from Israel's history. The Church by contrast is the Body, of which the Risen Christ is Head. But of that relationship, which is paramount and essential, these chapters give us no hint or sign.

This is "the city which hath the foundations whose Builder and Maker is God"; the city, for which, we read, Abraham looked as the home of his people, and which "made him a pilgrim below." It is not a millennial city, for it descends out of the new heavens to the new earth; there is no break at ver. 9, as some have supposed, and

ver. 10 merely repeats ver. 2, adding further particulars. The new earth will be centred, metropolized, by the New Jerusalem; and Israel in all her tribes, and honouring her twelve apostles (ver. 12-14), will occupy the beloved city, now transcendently glorious and beautiful.

The nations, all saved (the R.V. omits the words "of them that are saved," ver. 24), for all shall be now in new life and resurrection, are still distinguished from Israel, though all are reconciled to God (Col. i.), and all under one head in Christ (Eph. i.). The wall (broken down during the present Church interval) is re-erected, but pierced on all sides by gates for free ingress and egress, no danger now of the repetition of the millennial revolt.

Here there shall be "no death"—for death shall have been destroyed at the end of the Millennium (1 Cor. xv.; Rev. xx. 14)—no sorrow, no tears, no sickness (compare xxi. 4 and xxii. 2),* no night, and no curse. Conditions,

* A careful student of the Greek says upon this verse: "'And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.' It should be for the *health* (*εἰς θεράπείαν*) of the nations—that is, to sustain them in health; not to cure them from sickness, as in the next verse, 'there shall be no more curse,' and, if so, no more sickness nor death. . . . The Vulgate and Latin versions render the word here *ad sanitatem*, for the health; on which Poole's synopsis adds, 'Non reparandum, quia morbi tunc nulli erunt, sed tuendam, sive servandam.' From all which it is evident that the passage refers not to the Millennium, but to the post-millennial or final state.

"It is true that it may be said the allusion is to Ezek. xlvii. 9-12 when the leaf of the tree is for medicine (*εἰς ἰγνείαν*), a different word from the other, referring absolutely to sickness, and so referring to the millennial state. . . . Here the ulterior connections belong to a state of things in which there is no more curse, and no more death, and consequently no more need of healing, but yet dependent upon God and the Lamb for continued sustenance.

"The verse is, in fact, the blessed assurance to man that in the new creation there will be perfect and perpetual health."

all of them, which, as we have seen, will mark the Millennium throughout its course with shadows black and heavy.

And yet the scene here described is not eternal, for the Lamb is still upon the throne. God and the Lamb are its temple, God and the Lamb are its light, God and the Lamb are on its throne. When the eternal state has come, the Lamb will have ceased to reign as Lamb, though, as we know, He will reign as Divine for evermore.

In the Millennium we have the reign of the Lamb (Rev. v. 6-13).

In the KINGDOM beyond we have the reign of God and the Lamb (Rev. xxii. 1-3).

In the Eternal state we have the reign of God alone (1 Cor. xv. 24).

Thus in all the passages which we have so briefly and imperfectly examined, we have shown two principal features.

(1) A KINGDOM is described in which the Risen Man, Christ Jesus, is the King, and which, therefore, *cannot be eternal* (1 Cor. xv.).

(2) A KINGDOM in which features are present directly foreign to the distinguishing characteristics of the Millennium, and which, therefore, *cannot be millennial*.

And thus we are compelled by a weight of evidence, which, I believe, exceeds that which supports any other prophetic revelation, to arrive at the conclusion that this KINGDOM intervenes between the millennial and the eternal state.

That I conceive to be, after what has been said indisputable.

"There is a fold where none can stray,
And pastures ever green ;
Where sultry sun, or stormy day,
Or night, are never seen.
Far up the everlasting hills,
In God's own light it lies ;
His smile its vast dimension fills
With joy that never dies."

BEVERLEY.

"And it came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron, . . . and he said, . . . To-day Jehovah will appear unto you. . . . And all the congregation drew near, and stood before Jehovah, and Moses said, The glory of Jehovah shall appear unto you. . . . And Moses and Aaron . . . came out and blessed the people, and the glory of Jehovah appeared unto all the people."—LEV. ix. 1-24.

"And the priest shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah to be accepted for you, on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

"On the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto Jehovah: it is a solemn assembly (or closing festival, R.V.); . . . on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest."—LEV. xxiii., R.V.

"On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly (or closing festival, R.V.); ye shall do no servile work therein."

NUM. xxix. 35.

"In the eighth day they made a solemn assembly" (or closing festival, R.V.)—2 CHRON. vii. 9.

"On the eighth day was a solemn assembly" (or closing festival, R.V.)—NEH. viii. 18.

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. . . . Then were the disciples glad. And after eight days again came Jesus and said, Peace be unto you."

JOHN xx.

X.

The Eighth Day.



HERE is confirmatory evidence of the truth of this view from the types of the Old Testament. For, as will have been already observed, the direct revelation as to the KINGDOM's final form is wholly derived from the New Testament. The earlier scriptures, which prophesy so fully the millennial state, give us but hints here and there as to the New Creation KINGDOM of Christ, yet hints not to be lightly overlooked. For example, in the eighth day of the Mosaic code, we have a type of the period in question.* Without fixing any actual term to the present dispensation (as some have done, supposing that six thousand years from the creation will introduce the Millennium), we may certainly agree with all interpreters, that the Millennium is typified morally, if not chronologically, by the Sabbath, or seventh day.

But Scripture points to an eighth day (see Lev. xxiii. 16), "the morrow after the Sabbath"; and (verses 36 and 39) to eighth-day celebrations. The seventh day has to do with the old creation, for God rested upon it, and gave it to man for his rest from toil. It is the old creation rest, earthly, human, natural. It is also imperfect. So the

* See Appendix B.

Millennium will bring in an earthly, human, natural, and imperfect day, or period of rest for the world. For Israel chiefly, but for all nations if they will have it.

But the eighth day, the first day of the week, the day of our Lord's resurrection, and the day of Pentecost too, points to the new creation rest. After the imperfect rest of nature on the seventh comes the supernatural and perfect rest of resurrection on the eighth day, the great "closing festival" (see refs., p. 92).

So the perfect glory of the risen Christ in connection with a resurrection KINGDOM will come in upon the morrow of the Sabbath Millennium. (Examine Num. xxix. 35, with Lev. ix. 1; and xxiii. 36-39.)

Note, therefore, that this eighth day cannot point to the Millennium, which is represented by the seventh.

And it cannot be Eternity, for it is a *day* or definite period, like each of the preceding days.

And if any one contends that the eighth day means Eternity future, I ask how it comes that Eternity past is not also represented by a day? How simple it would have been, for example, to describe creation as beginning on the second day, the first representing the previous undivided age of Eternity past. Thus there would be harmony in this interpretation. But it is not so. The first division of time for man is called the first day, the last is called the eighth day. Eternity lies behind the first and beyond the last. The eighth day must therefore be a dispensation lying between the Millennium and the subsequent Eternity.

As to the *duration* of that Age, we have, so far, purposely avoided any discussion—not because it is in

any way illegitimate, but because it is a mere question of detail.

And though now introducing a slight sketch of what seems to be scriptural light given on this detail, I earnestly beg of my readers not to allow their minds to dwell upon it in any such degree as to weaken their attention to the main argument, or to the fundamental characteristics of the period.

Hitherto in our inquiry we have adhered strictly to the conditions with which we started, *i.e.*, have taken nothing for truth but what clear scriptural teaching could be found for; have adopted no theory of men; given rein to no imagination; not even called in aid the powerful ally of inference or induction.

We have put ourselves under holy Scripture as our guide, and sought to follow only where it leads. So in this last detail would we do, and ask our Bibles what the duration of this Age of Ages is to be. And although, so far as I now see, we have not here the same clear information, there are indications sufficient to give some approximate idea on the subject. This indistinctness corresponds with that of other parts of the vision of futurity. For it will be remembered that when the time of the Lord's coming was under investigation, He refused to raise the veil; and, again, when the time of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel was sought, He said: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Nevertheless, even as to these two coming events, there were "signs" given, "unto which ye do well to take heed"; and we have the like in the present case, which I shall venture to suggest, but not dogmatically.

It is well, when searching "what manner of time" is allotted by the Creator for future periods, to remember the duration of those that are past. For example, the testimony of Scripture that God rested from creation-work on the seventh day, coupled with the fact that that creation-rest continues to this present time, fixes the "seventh day" as a period of at least five thousand nine hundred years, and is in harmony with the testimony of the rocks, as to the long periods to which the previous stages of the world's history extended.

If, then, the seventh day—the rest-day—of the old creation reach six thousand years or more, to what length may not the eighth—the rest-day of the new—be prolonged?

The more we study the marvellous book of God that is written in the heavens, and follow in their magnificent courses the journeys of other worlds beside our own, and seek to grasp the prodigious distances to which the celestial domain extends, the more shall we be prepared for the discovery that the cycles of time are also far beyond what, in our less perfect knowledge—or, rather, in our profounder ignorance—we had imagined. Let us, then, turn to Scripture for the light we seek.

And, first, let me point again to the title of the KINGDOM Age: "The dispensation of the fulness of the times." That word, "fulness of the times," seems to imply not only the fulfilment of the broken purposes and plans of past dispensations, but also a duration of times, in comparison to which all past ages shall be but as fragments; while this will be complete: the complement, the fulness, *the full-time dispensation*—the dispensation that shall be grand, and glorious, and complete; not only in its character,

but also in its duration. It is not Eternity, which is excluded by the first word, "dispensation," or "stewardship" (*οἰκονομία*), and by the last, "times" (*τῶν καιρῶν*), but it is a period of magnificent proportions, for it is "the stewardship of the *fulness of the seasons*."

Secondly, we find in Deut. vii. 9 and 1 Chron. xvi. 15, an indirect, but not unimportant, confirmation of our forecast, where the duration of the covenant of God with Israel is extended, not merely to a thousand years, but to "a thousand generations"—a truly glorious revelation of Israel's future in the Age of the new creation: in connection with which it is well to reflect upon the perfect suitability and appropriateness, of an enlarged cycle of duration, corresponding with a condition of fulness of blessing.

Now refer to the Psalm of Moses, the 90th, wherein, after describing in magnificent language the Eternity of the life of God, "from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God"—Moses speaks of a Millennium in the following terms: "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest" (perhaps addressing the rebel hosts around the beloved city), "'Return, ye children of men!' For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." How significant! not the longed-for day, but "a watch in the night." That is, a period, a dispensation, one of many, in the long night of this world's sinful, sorrowful story. The obvious conclusion is, we may confidently aver, that the Day, when it dawns, will last for a period glorious and immense by comparison with the preceding "watch in the night."

Again, let us ask ourselves whether it would be consistent with the revelation and history of God's dealings with

the world, that He should permit it to be flooded with sin, and rent with rebellion, for nearly six thousand years; and then, when His rule, temporarily and imperfectly acknowledged, has been once more impiously disputed in the great revolt, to receive back from His Son that Kingdom stained with blood, and charred with fires of judgment, and that He should have no further opportunity of rule as Son of Man? Should we not rather expect that His reign in the new heavens and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, would at least equal, if not greatly exceed in its length, the reign of Satan in the world of sin?

Further, it must be remembered that the comparative shortness of all past dispensations is due to the fact that they have been brought to an untimely, though not unmerited end, by the sin of men; while, as we know, nothing can ever occur in this to interrupt the Divine programme, till it has been wrought out to the full measure of its glorious destiny.

Finally, that the duration of the KINGDOM will not be only for a moment, but of long continuance, is shown, better than elsewhere, by reference to the description of the New Jerusalem.

(1) It is the Bride: a term, no doubt, indicative of a very brief and passing condition in human life; but it is "the Lamb's wife" in the angel's next word, a state of permanence, abiding duration, settled established union.

(2) Then we read that the nations shall walk in the light of it, and that the kings shall bring their glory into it, and that the gates shall not be shut at all (see R.V.). All these features, surely, represent a lasting, abiding state—not one suddenly appearing, and instantly to cease

(3) But, perhaps, the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, is the best, as it is the most beautiful, sign of this fact. Nothing, in nature, perhaps, points the poetical spirit more surely towards a continuing, lasting, restful life, than the perpetual flow of a deep, still stream.

Into that KINGDOM there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. Upon that placid sea no storm shall rise, no tempest beat; there shall also be no night there; and the happy multitudes that sail upon its waters shall know neither crying, pain, nor tears; they shall fear no danger, neither miss their course, nor have need to run for the refuge of any harbour. Throughout the sunny cycles of its course, time will pass, as it were, insensibly, for nought of strife or trouble shall break the smooth current of its ever increasing, ever deepening joy

"But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him. And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all."—1 COR. xv. 20-28, R.V.

XI.

"Thy Kingdom Come."



THE reader is requested to read attentively the passage on the opposite page, when no doubt it will be noted how closely the passage in Eph. i. (p. 10) corresponds with this (1 Cor. xv.); not only in the resurrection being, so to speak, the key-note of each, and in the amplification of Psalm viii. as applied to "all rule and authority and power" (words common to both), but also in the final words "all in all"—with this difference, that in the one, He "fillet all in all" becomes in the other, "God shall be all in all." According to Alford the words in Eph. i. refer to God the Father; in which case they read thus: "Gave Christ to be Head over all things (to the Church which is His Body), the fulness of God who filleth all in all" (see also Col. i. 19, and ii. 9). Thus the words of 1 Cor. xv. beautifully correspond with and supplement those of Eph. and Col., and all the fulness of the Godhead will fill the Man Monarch of the universe in the age of His royal glory.

In examining the construction of the wonderful passage,* 1 Cor. xv. 23-28, it is manifest that our blessed Lord's act of self-subjection to God in verse 28 may take place at the beginning rather than at the end of the KINGDOM. This

* See Appendix A.

view is confirmed by the translation given in the R.V. margin, and also as in Alford's Greek Testament, viz., "But when God *shall have declared* that all things have been subjected to Him, it is evident that He is excepted who did subject all things unto Him. And when all things have been subjected unto Him, then (*τοτε*) shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all" (R.V.).

This declaration of our Lord's sovereignty must, in the nature of it, take place at the commencement of His reign. It is the Divine proclamation of His enthronement and coronation. At that moment will be witnessed a further marvellous and glorious scene. The Lord, though crowned sole universal Monarch, will bow His knee to the Father, owning that He is excepted from the general subjection. God will not be subject to Man. Thus it will be manifested that the Man-King of all holds His sceptre at the will and by the appointment of God. This act of subjection marks the receiving of the KINGDOM, not its end or surrender; and, according to this view, the expression "that God may be all in all" refers to the ages of Christ's reign as man, rather than to eternity, although of course equally true for ever.

This act of homage beautifully explains our Lord's reference to the KINGDOM in the prayer of prayers as "Thy KINGDOM"—He Himself was to be King, yet the KINGDOM would be God's. Psalm xlvii. 7, "God is the King of all the earth." Yet in Psalm ii. He says, "I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion." Man shall reign by the appointment of God. To Man shall all things be subjected, God alone excepted. And so, even during the reign of the Son,

God shall be all in all. *That* place He will never resign, and Christ will own it as His, acknowledging in the Day of His supreme glory that it is from God His fulness comes. God will be all in Him who filleth all things. So in that day it is through the Son that God will fill all. For Christ filleth all things (Eph. iv. 10), but God filleth Him, and so shall, even then, be all in all. In this way the Lord's sufferings and glory will correspond. For as in the days of His flesh He declared that all His fulness of wisdom to teach was from God, and all His signs in miraculous power were given Him of God, so in the hour of His majesty and kingly glory all His fulness of power, rule, and authority, first to subjugate and then to reign, will be of God and from God, and will be owned to be so by some exquisite and transporting scene of self-subjection, at the very moment of Man's highest exaltation to this Universal Throne.

If it be argued by any that the words of 1 Cor. xv. 24, "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the KINGDOM to God, even the Father; when He shall have abolished (*καταργήσῃ*) all rule and all authority and power," refer to the great white throne, and that that, therefore, is the "end" alluded to, it will be sufficient to point out that, in that case, Christ will have no KINGDOM proper at all. For, manifestly, the suppression of all enemies is a preliminary to the Reign proper; and if, immediately upon this taking place, our Lord were to abdicate the throne, His Royal Glory would be a very insignificant, almost despicable, affair. When the David-reign of war is ended in victory, the Solomon-reign of peace will begin.

The confusion that ignores this patent truth arises from

the fact that, in the enumeration, in this passage, of the several stages of Christ's exaltation, intervening time is neglected, the "order" of events, not their duration, being in question. In ver. 23, for example, we read, "Christ the first-fruits, afterwards (*ἐνευρα*) they that are Christ's at His coming." Nearly nineteen hundred years separate the two clauses. Again, the latter clause of ver. 24 precedes, in order of time, the former, shown by the words, "when He *shall have* abolished," and between the last clause of ver. 23 and that of ver. 24, intervene, as we know, a thousand years. "Then (afterwards) cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the KINGDOM," etc., is a passage of the same kind. How long "the KINGDOM" shall last is not explained.

No doubt our English word "till" (*ἄχρι*), which occurs in this passage, as well as in Psalm cx., tends to confirm the strange misconception that Christ will cease to reign as soon as in the true sense He begins to reign. The words are in the Psalm, "Sit Thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet"; and here, "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet." The session of the one verse, is the "reign" of the other.

But this word "till" is used in Scripture frequently without any reference to a termination or terminus at the point referred to. It indicates, no doubt, a change in some important feature of the conditions, but not an ending of all.

For example, in Romans v. 13, "Until the Law, sin was in the world." Who would suggest for a moment that this implies that sin ended when the Law came in?

Again, Romans viii. 22, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The apostle

does not mean, unfortunately, that the groans ceased at Christ's coming, as the next verse shows.

Again, in Hebrews iii. 13, the same word is translated "while" in the A.V., and "so long as" in the R.V. "Exhort one another daily, so long as it is called to-day," in which sense the verse in Psalm cx. would run thus: "Sit Thou at my right hand while (or, so long as) I make thine enemies thy footstool."

The like meaning attaches to the word in Acts xxvii. 33, "While the day was coming on"; it is continuous time, not the termination of time.

There is, however, a passage which more clearly than any of these explains the word "till" in this connection; I mean Gen. xlix. 10, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the obedience of the peoples be." Hengstenberg says, "This means that Judah shall not cease to exist as a tribe, nor lose its superiority, until it shall be exalted to higher honour and glory through the great Redeemer, who shall spring from it, and whom not only the Jews but all the nations of the earth shall obey." This is, therefore, a verse exactly corresponding to those which we are discussing: "Sit Thou at my right hand until, by making thine enemies thy footstool, I exalt thee to the highest honour of the throne, the peaceful obedience of all creation." He must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet, and therefore and thereafter reign still more gloriously, undisturbed by any enemies. "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged" (we read in Isa. xlii. 4) "*till* He have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law," nor yet then.

The *till* carries us forward to the perfect state beyond. Also see margin in Bagster's Bible at Dan. i. 21.

Dr. Bullinger explains in his "Critical Lexicon and Concordance" that the Greek word ($\alpha\chi\rho\iota$) used in 1 Cor. xv. 25 for "till" "fixes the attention upon the whole duration up to the limit, but leaving the further continuance undetermined." He says of the other word ($\mu\epsilon\chi\rho\iota$) "until, referring solely to the limit, implying that the action there terminates."

I have dwelt thus fully upon this word, because its misinterpretation is doubtless responsible for the prevalent error; while the scriptures I have quoted are conclusive that it cannot teach that as soon as the KINGDOM is won, it is then immediately given up.

Lux umbra Dei.

"Then cometh the end."—1 COR. xv. 24.

"Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, I dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."—ISA. lvii. 15.

"The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever."—DEUT. xxix. 29.

"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: he revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers."—DAN. ii. 20-23.

XII.

"Then Cometh the End."



HEREIN, then, lies the difference between the post-millennial Age and the eternal state? The difference lies in this, that in that Age all things will be headed up in Christ, as the Risen Man and the Church's Head; while in Eternity all things will be subject unto God immediately—that is, of course, also to the Son of God as God.

Up to that "end" the history of man's fall and rise will not be finished. Then it will. Then God will be vindicated in regard to man's creation, and justified for His long forbearance with the sinful race. Then the sufferings and death of the Sinless Substitute will have had their glorious explanation, and the ruin of the millennial world its ample and more than ample compensation.

What the 8th Psalm has taught us is, that the destiny of man was nothing less than universal dominion. Adam, as the latter verses show, enjoyed some shadow of this; for he named the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and every living creature; and the fear of him was upon them all. But sin entering, the Rest of God and the sovereignty of man was broken through; and yet, long afterwards, Solomon was given to enjoy a larger measure

of it; for he reigned in Israel a reign of peace, and reigned over all the kings around him all the days of his life (1 Kings iv. 21). But again royal self-indulgence and national rebellion interrupted the kingdom of man, and Israel is shattered and dispersed.

To our blessed Lord in resurrection it fell to recover man's lost estate. And a first instalment became His when He took the throne, in all believing hearts of men to this day, and became Head of the Church, which is His Body, in vital union with which He will presently enlarge the sphere of His sovereign glory. Then He that was made a little lower than Angels is enthroned as their King. And we shall here again be His partners, on the Angelic throne. "Know ye not that we shall judge Angels?"

In the Millennium another vast increment of that inheritance will become His; for then repentant Israel will own His sceptre to a man: and for ten centuries Christ will dispense the blessings of the throne of David in their midst; and, in fulfilment of Psalm ii., behold the heathen also, the nations of the world at large, compelled to bow to Him.

But in the Dispensation of the fulness of times the final instalment—the complement of the universal dominion—will come in. For then the Son of Man will not only reign as Head of the Church, complete to its last and smallest member, all made like unto Himself, in glorified spirit and glorified body; He will not only reign over all angels in the spheres above; He will not only reign in Israel complete, in Mount Zion, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the city of the living God, over the spirits of the just of all the ages, "made perfect" in body also; Christ will not only reign in the Church in heaven, and over Israel on earth—but will also reign

in the hearts of all the nations of the new earth; the raised and glorified from among the Gentiles of all the ages past, before and after this present period of the Church, the happy populations of the New Earth, whose glory and honour will flow towards Israel's city and New Jerusalem's gates, in an uninterrupted, joyful tribute of love and praise and homage! The will of God shall be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.

Christ will not only reign as the Risen Head of the Church, over angels, in Israel, and in the whole population of the new earth; He will also reign as Man over the infernal regions and their peoples, the fallen spirits and their victims, the lost souls of the children of men. And thus the dominion of the Risen Christ, the last Adam, the Son of Adam, the Son of David, the First-born from the dead, shall extend to all the universe, God alone excepted; and in Christ Jesus humanity shall be enthroned, when at, or in, the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The Kingdom of Man will not cease in its expansion till it embraces within its sphere all created things. It will be universal. But it will not be eternal.

To guard against misconception, be it repeated here that there is no question of the Eternity of the Manhood, the Risen Humanity, of the Lord. "He asked life of Thee," we read (Psa. xxi.), "Thou gavest it Him, even length of days for ever and ever." It is simply a matter of his official, governmental glory as Man.

Again, there is no question of his eternal Oneness with the saints as their Risen Head.

And there is no question of the eternal joy of the believer and the eternal woe of the rejector.

We are discussing, rather, the conditions attaching to the reign, the rule, the KINGDOM of Christ and the Church, in the universe of God.

It is, as we have seen, post-millennial, universal, and terminable. Paul is our witness. The "apostle of the mystery" has this honour. His vision of the past reaches further back than that of Moses, and his vision of the future touches a point in time beyond that reached by any other of the prophets. He tells of the act of abdication, by which the Man—King of all things—shall deliver up the sceptre and the crown, borne and worn by virtue of the cross. Paul alone is permitted to see so far. The revelations of 1 Cor. xv. are, in fact, the sequel and the conclusion of those we have considered in Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. It is strange how little scriptural writers have applied themselves to this furthest point in time, and the solemn and glorious act of Christ which distinguishes it. In history many abdications have occurred. But none the least like this. Many have been forced upon the reigning prince, because of his crimes, cruelties, or impotence. Some have been voluntary, and free from external pressure, no doubt; but in these cases it was usually the result of weariness, of disappointment, of physical infirmity, or of ambition to secure some particular successor, and so confirm and consolidate the dynasty. In every case failure of some kind was the cause of abdication. Here it is success. And abdication is promotion.

At the sole will of Jesus Christ, when the time comes, He will abdicate His human throne. And when He delivers up the KINGDOM to God, He will be able to render an account, like that of John xvii. in another

connection, saying, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," and point to all the vast spheres and continents of the new heavens and new earth, and challenge all creation to detect a fault, a flaw, or a single false professor, in the whole. What a contrast that challenge will be to the challenge of Rev. v., when the apostle's tears flowed bitterly to find that no one was found worthy to open the Book or to look thereon! What a contrast, still more striking, with the Millennium's end, when Satan's challenge rouses the earth at large, to join the standard of revolt, and to cry as with one voice, "We will not any more have this Man to reign over us." Is it not manifest that no such scene as this abdication could possibly be a feature of the Millennium's end? For how, indeed, could the blessed Lord, without dishonour, deliver up the KINGDOM then? Rent with sedition, shattered with rebellion, flooded with streams of fiery wrath, that will be no time to point to the scene, and pronounce the work finished and very good.

But, now, what bursts of song, what shouts of triumph, what anthems of praise, will rend those eternal skies when not one unworthy member, not one defaulter, not one sinner, is found within that infinite expanse; not one unbended knee in the infernal regions of the lost. THEN COMETH THE END! Oh, contemplate that scene of Christ's abdication, and the retrocession of the KINGDOM to God! And picture to yourself, if you can, what shall be the glory of that day of work completed, and God justified; of THE MAN, in happy triumph, surrendering to God the crown He had worn unsullied and unstained for all the long cycles of the most glorious of all dispensations.

If there was joy in heaven when the little Lamb took

the book of His title to all this from the hand of Him who sat upon the throne; what will be the joy of His surrendering it unsullied, undisputed, and all glorious! *Then* faith prompted the songs which, from ever-widening spheres, broke forth to praise the Lamb, whose triumph was still future. But now, after long experience, and in full view of His absolute success, multitudes whom none can number will celebrate His praise as the Conqueror, the victorious Champion of all creation, the Great Healer of all sin and sickness, the Redeemer of the lost and defiled inheritance, the rightful Ruler and Sovereign Lord of the realm which by His blood He had won from the usurper's grasp.

Oh, what a scene that will be! Then God will take back to His own sole and supreme sovereignty a total universe, in absolute subjection, and, so far as the heavens and the earth are concerned, in complete harmony with Himself, and adoring love to their Creator.

The reign of Christ as Man will cease, that the reign of God, of Christ as God, may take its place and last for evermore. Retaining his "Second Man" nature, the last Adam resumes the place of subjection, resigns His supreme office, and, as Sovereign, retires into God; so that to Him might be said at that hour:—

"Thy throne, O Man, thou hast resigned, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

No doubt it is from failure to discern this that many have felt indisposed to accept the idea of a terminable reign of Christ. They have failed to distinguish the human from the Divine; and because they observed numerous indications of the *eternal* glory of the Son, have hastily assumed that that was the mediatorial, instead of the essential, glory, the human KINGDOM instead of the Divine.

"O river of my peace,
Rock of my rest! shelter from every storm!
Light of my darkness, joy of my distress!
Balm of my wounded spirit! morning star
Of all my future! haven of my hopes;
O day-spring from on high, whose cloudless light
Has beamed upon me—banishing my night
With dawn of heaven. Sun of righteousness
Rise, oh for ever rise! and ever shine
Brighter and brighter! From all weeping eyes
Remove all tears, and over all thy saints,
And over earth and heaven, and o'er the bounds
Of Time's dark night, and far into the depths
Of all eternity pour out the light,
Pour out the sea of glory, the full sea
Of all thy glory—inexhaustible.
Pour out for ever and for evermore,
And o'er the earth renewed, and azure heaven
Unshadowed, and the realms of endless peace,
Spread the sweet noontide of the hallowed day
Of God—the Sabbath of Eternity."

H. G. GUINNESS.

Appendix A.

Note to page 102, on 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

In verse 24, the word "cometh" in our English versions, both the Authorized and Revised, is an unfortunate addition, directing the mind rather to an event than to a period. "Then the End" (τέλος), that is, "the END when all shall be accomplished, the *bringing in and fulness* of the Kingdom by the subjugation of the last enemy" (Alford, Gr. Test., in *loco*). "Liddell and Scott" define the strict sense of τέλος, not as the ending of a past state, but the arrival of a complete and perfect one. It is the final dispensation towards which all that precede it have been and shall be leading up. The sense will be made apparent by reference to the case of Job. In Jas. v. 11, we read: "Ye have seen the *end* of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy"; and in Job xlii. 12, "So Jehovah blessed the latter *end* of Job more than his beginning"; verse 16, "After this lived Job an hundred and forty years." That is, the words "beginning" and "end" both comprise long periods of time. So is it here. If the "end" of Job's life lasted for 140 years, to what length may not the "end" of Christ's Kingdom extend? (See also Heb. ix. 26.)

Again, in reply to those who suppose that the words, "He must reign *till* He hath put all His enemies under His feet," imply that at that time the Reign shall terminate,

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let us ask ourselves what meaning would attach to a similar statement as to Job. For example, "He must live till all his diseases are cured and distresses are relieved." Would that imply that when once again made well and happy, Job should die? It is absurd. The reign of Christ was to last till all His enemies were abolished, and continue thenceforward (like the life of Job) in the new and peaceful conditions.

The whole passage, verses 24-28, is divided into two sections, distinguished by the verbs καταργέω in the first part (verses 24-26) and ὑποτάσσω in the second (27, 28). The first is translated "put down" and "destroy" in the Authorized version, and "abolish" in the Revised. It refers to the victory of Christ at the beginning of the period, by which all enemies so proudly defiant at the close of the Millennium shall be abolished and ended. The second is uniformly translated in the R.V. "subject," or "put in subjection," and occurs six times in the two verses (27, 28). It is not the same thing as the first. That was an act, this is a lasting condition; that was the inauguration of the Kingdom, this is its order, or constitution; that was a Victory, this is a Reign; that fulfils Psa. cx. 1, this Psa. viii. 6.

The teaching of the passage will, I believe, be elucidated by the following transcript, with the explanatory words in brackets, and will show how carefully the apostle's words are chosen to convey the leading thought in the mind of the Spirit.

"Then the end [or final dispensation], when [that is, at the conclusion of which period] He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when [that is, at the beginning of which period] He shall have brought to

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nought all Rule and all Authority and Power. For He [Christ] must reign till [and after] He [God] shall have put all enemies under His [Christ's] feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is Death.

"For He put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He [God] shall have declared, 'All things are put in [a settled state of] subjection to Him,' it is evident that He [God] is excepted, which did subject all things unto Him [Christ]. And when all things have been subjected unto Him [Christ], then shall the Son also Himself be subjected [that is, as to His reigning attitude] to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that [even throughout the term of Christ's Kingdom, as always] God may be all in all."

Appendix B.

Note to page 93.

As to the duration of the Kingdom in its fulness, nothing certain can be known. I have suggested from the expression, "a thousand generations," that a very lengthened period may be possible; others suppose these words to express nothing more than extended time, wholly indefinite; and it has been argued, that if the world's 6,000 years' history, up to the Millennium, correspond with the six days of creation and of our working week, and that if the Millennium correspond with the 7th thousand, and is the Sabbatic age, it would be a true analogy to suppose that the Kingdom proper will correspond to the 8th day, not only in its relative position, in time, as will be seen (p. 96), but also as to its term; and that, therefore, a second Millennium of perfection, after the first of imperfection, would close the stream of time and satisfy the requirements of prophecy. On this suggestion I make no remark, but submit it for consideration.

Postscript.

We do not doubt that in process of time the doctrine here set out will be perceived to be the truth of God. Confirmation of this conviction is found in the whole story of the origin and victory of the Christian religion itself. Truth, however unwelcome, must and will at last prevail over error. The revelation of God is gradually, and yet rapidly, becoming unfolded in a manner and to a degree altogether unprecedented; while every assault of infidelity and atheism is made the occasion for the providential discovery, from the ruins of buried cities and temples, of confirmations written and engraven in stone, which put the assailant to the blush, and drive him discomfited to some fresh point of attack.

There are, in spite of recent explorations, regions of the map of the world upon which must still be written the words "Unexplored country." Happy are the men and fruitful is their courageous energy, who, for the benefit of the human race, venture off the beaten track, to search out "fresh fields and pastures new" for the overflowing populations of the older world.

An eminent statesman, who is also no mean authority upon scientific questions, has recently used the following words in an address, the burden of which is the ignorance, as to some of the most fundamental problems of nature, in which science, despite all its great achievements, leaves us still. He said:

"We live in a small, bright oasis of knowledge,

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surrounded on all sides by a vast unexplored region of impenetrable mystery. From age to age the strenuous labour of successive generations wins a small strip from the desert, and pushes forward the boundary of knowledge. . . . It is a less attractive task, but yet it has its fascination as well as its uses, to turn our eyes to the undiscovered country which still remains to be won, to some of the stupendous problems of natural study which still defy our investigation."

In the heart of man the same mystery occurs.

"When thou art fain to trace a map of thine own heart,
As undiscovered land set down the largest part." *

The Word of God is no exception to the universal law governing the works of the Creator. To man it is given but to dabble in the broken waters on the shore. The ocean of Truth lies beyond. If any venture to sail his bark a little further out in whatever direction, surely he may claim the sympathy and co-operation of all whose prayer is expressed in the words of David: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. I am a sojourner in the earth: hide not Thy commandments from me. My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto Thy judgments at all times" (Psa. cxix. 18-20).

To that prayer from lips however lisping the Blessed One delights to give an answer of peace. It is not always to the wisest, the most learned, the most gifted, that the vision of God is given in greatest clearness and glory. The babes and sucklings have also their blessed revelations—not for their sakes surely—it is the working out of the Divine economy of self-unveiling.

* R. Chenevix Trench.

Postscript.

"For I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns." *

What more glorious expansion of thought can be conceived in our present condition of ignorance than that which shows that the sceptre and the crown of His Royal Estate, as Human Sovereign of the universe at large, will not be laid aside by the Lord, our Saviour Jesus Christ, as we had heretofore supposed, at the moment of stupendous apparent defeat, and the seeming ruin of His work; will not be laid aside until after long ages of universal peace, of perfect happiness, and a reign of love in every ransomed soul, and over every principality and power in heaven and earth; will not be laid aside till God is glorified perfectly in man, and man has justified his elevation in Christ to the highest place of Rule! No less a vision of glory than this will be the portion of all who shall receive what has been written.

* Tennyson.

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Appendix.

"We are in danger of living too much in the present, and of looking upon the Divine activities as if they were haphazard or accidental, as our own always are, save as we are under the control of the Spirit of God. The corrective is found in studying history from the Divine standpoint. Nothing yields a more chaotic, uncertain, and unsatisfactory result than a view merely from the human side; while, on the contrary, order, beauty, and progress, are seen only as we take the Divine outlook."—*Extract from Introduction.*

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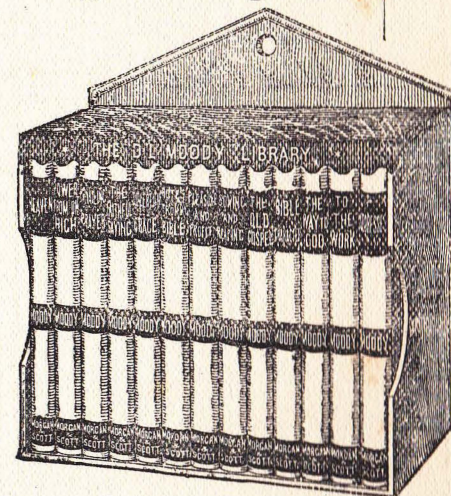


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